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The Mastery of Grief

By Bolton Hall

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Hall

THE MASTERY OF GRIEF

BY

BOLTON HALL

AUTHOR OF "THREE ACRES AND LIBERTY,"
"THINGS AS THEY ARE," ETC.

"Every one can master a grief but he that has it."
Much Ado About Nothing, Act iii, Scene 2.

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DEDICATED

TO THE MEMORY
OF A
LOVING LITTLE BOY

and to the
Givers of "Black Mustard Seed"

"'Yea! little sister, there is that might heal
Thee first, and him, if thou couldst fetch the thing;
For they who seek physicians bring to them
What is ordained. Therefore, I pray thee, find
Black Mustard Seed, a tola; only mark
Thou take it not from any hand or house
Where father, mother, child, or slave hath died;
It shall be well if thou canst find such seed.'
Thus didst thou speak, my Lord!"
The Master smiled
Exceeding tenderly. "Yes! I spake thus,
Dear Kisagotami! But didst thou find
The seed?"

"I went, Lord, clasping to my breast
The babe, grown colder, asking at each hut—
Here in the jungle and towards the town—
'I pray you, give me mustard, of your grace,
A tola—black;' and each who had it gave,
For all the poor are piteous to the poor;

But when I asked, 'In my friend's household here
Hath any peradventure ever died—
Husband or wife, or child, or slave?' they said:
'O Sister! what is this you ask? the dead
Are very many, and the living few!'
So with sad thanks I gave the mustard back,
And prayed of others; but the others said,
'Here is the seed, but we have lost our slave!'
'Here is the seed, but our good man is dead!'
'Here is some seed, but he that sowed it died
Between the rain-time and the harvesting!'
Ah, sir! I could not find a single house
Where there was mustard seed and none had died!
Therefore I left my child—who would not suck
Nor smile—beneath the wild vines by the stream,
To seek thy face and kiss thy feet, and pray
Where I may find this seed and find no death,
If now, indeed, my baby be not dead,
As I do fear, and as they said to me."

"My sister! thou hast found," the Master said,
"Searching for what none finds—that bitter balm
I had to give thee. He thou lovst slept
Dead on thy bosom yesterday: to-day
Thou know'st the whole wide world weeps with thy woe:
The grief which all hearts share grows less for one.
Lo! I would pour my blood if it could stay
Thy tears and win the secret of that curse
Which makes sweet love our anguish, and which drives
O'er flowers and pastures to the sacrifice—
As these dumb beasts are driven—men their lords.
I seek that secret: bury thou thy child!"

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD: *Light of Asia.*

PREFACE

If there is order in the world, if malice does not rule, there must be such understanding as will minister to our needs in time of trouble. Religious consolation often fails because a great catastrophe seems to break down religious belief, at least for the time. The impulse is to "curse God and die." Some in their agony do not care to understand but wish rather to believe, and find comfort in that without regard to reason. Reason seems to them a cold, lifeless thing; their bruised hearts need warmth and passion. The thought that their grief was directly sent them brings comfort with the pain, whereas the realization that it was merely a natural consequence directly related not only to their own lives but also to the lives of their fellow-beings, would add but one more sting to their suffering. For such

there is already abundant literature.* To the other mourners—bereft, agonized, bewildered, and to those, the cause of whose sorrow is not death but as it were death in life, these words are offered.

* Among the best of such are Dr. C. C. Hall's *Does God Send Sorrow?* and Logan's *Words of Comfort*, which collects all that the clergy can say and presents it in an unobtrusive way. It has also a fair anthology of consolatory verse.

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Sorrow is a wound that bleeds when any hand but that of love touches it, and even then must bleed again, though not in pain.

Oscar Wilde: *De Profundis.*

THE TRAGEDY OF DEATH

Our crosses are hewn from different trees,
But we all must have our Calvaries;
We must climb the height from a different side,
But we each go up to be crucified;
As we scale the steep, another may share
The dreadful load that our shoulders bear,
But the costliest sorrow is all our own—
For on the summit we bleed alone.

FREDERIC LAWRENCE KNOWLES: *Love Triumphant.*

CHAPTER I

THE TRAGEDY OF DEATH

To multitudes of contented, happy hearts, comes an overturn of their whole lives—sudden, however long it may have been feared, an overturn not understood, at first unbelievable—like a nightmare—when one who has been part of themselves is gone, never to be seen or heard or felt again!—when the sun rises as before—the seasons change—the world goes on as before, though it seems unnatural that it should—for all life seems to have ended with the object of their love, leaving only a miserable, purposeless being who moves about from habit or necessity. And this evil dream is without an end—they seek unconsciously every hour for the look, the voice, the hand, and cannot realize that these are nevermore for them. It is unjust, incredible—but it is true. They now feel

what they have read of, heard and even seen, yet never realized before. They now perceive that they have never truly known what it was to sympathise. The tragedy of the world has come near to them—the iron has entered into their own souls.

At first the loss is not fully understood. There is weariness and a relaxing of strain; it's all over but there is much to do; we are still busied over the beloved One who is dead but who continues to absorb our attention. We take part in all that must be done in the changed condition; we even feel that there may be a possible mode of living yet.

But the dear demands on the attention pass; new purposeless days present themselves, things return to their usual form. The old ways of life are resumed, but without that which was their inspiration. The wound that the sharp knife made without a shock now aches. Our thoughts and feelings are still those that the loved one felt. We turn as of old to share each new experience, and we turn only to find emptiness. That old happy life seems so

near that its help is with us yet. But as Lady Eastlake wrote—"a deep gulf lies between. It seemed but a little fissure at first, but it yawns wider and wider, and its opposite shores—we on the one side, those we love on the other—are two different states of being."

This is the time that the true remedy for our woe needs to be brought to us; when the strain of the wrench is supposed to have passed. We feel that the good of life has ended for us, that there is no further use in living; that our lives can nevermore be good for others and that there is no reason why they should be so. That is selfishness, it is a mistake; the world needs us yet, else we should not be in it. Though weeping endure for the long night, peace, at least and at last, cometh in the morning. We must gather up the broken pieces and make them of service still. Only in that way shall we find rest unto our own souls.

The heart cries out "They tell me of a loving Father and this is how he treats me, tearing from me the only thing worth living for. Why did he give

love if this is its fruit? A God could not be so cruel. There is no God."

I do not think that any God could be angry for that.

We are not angry with our little children when they think us unkind, because they do not understand what we are doing; neither will our lack of understanding grieve the Spirit of Love.

To understand everything is to forgive everything, and when we see either why Life acts so, or else that it could not act otherwise, our resentment vanishes.

Some minds can soothe themselves with abstract philosophy like Pope's—All "chance" is direction that we cannot see:

> All discord, harmony not understood;
> All partial evil, universal good.

Let us seek together the comfort there may be in plain thought outside of man-made creeds.

"Religion," says Worcester's Dictionary, "is the feeling or expression of human love, awe, or fear of some superhuman and over-ruling power, whether made by pro-

fession of belief, by observance of rites and ceremonies or by the conduct of life."

I think religion is rather one's theory of life as distinguished from blind belief. Devotion is something different from that. There is religion and some solace too in Kipling's lines:

. . . who clears the grounding berg and steers the grinding floe,
He hears the cry of the little kit fox and the lemming on the snow.

SEPARATION

He lives, he wakes—'tis Death is dead, not he;
Mourn not for Adonais—Thou young Dawn,
Turn all thy dew to splendor for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!
Cease, ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou Air,
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown
O'er the abandoned earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its despair!

He is made one with Nature; then is heard
His voice in all the music, from the moan
Of thunder, to the song of night's sweet bird.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY: *Adonais.*

CHAPTER II

SEPARATION

Separation is not a matter of space or time, it is essentially a matter of feeling. You can be more hopelessly separated from your brother a block away, if there is any lack of sympathy between you, than you would be from your lover in China. A relative may live in the next street and yet weeks may go by without intercourse, while a friend living miles away may be with us every day. It is sympathy or antagonism, the congenial or irritating atmosphere, that binds us closely to anyone or separates us widely. We see this and prove it every day without heeding it. When our friends are away we think of them and they think of us without any sense of separation, so that after years we meet again unestranged; our minds have kept in touch with theirs, and theirs with

ours. Sometimes events crowd so thick and fast upon us that days go by without even a written word between us and those we love. Then, when the need of intercourse of some sort becomes imperative, we lie awake into the night perhaps and in thought hold communication with the loved one. We say in our minds all we would say with the voice were the tangible person present. We feel relieved and refreshed by this intercourse, and drop to sleep contentedly, cured of any sense of separation. The distance between us has not diminished, but we have annihilated it by our attitude toward it.

The sense of separation between ourselves and those who have passed on depends upon that same attitude of mind. If we persist in regarding ourselves as parted the degree and pain of that separation increase. But if in our thought we bridge the "fixed" gulf, we shall get a sense of nearness that will be balm to heal our wound and bring us a measure of peace.

Each of us is three persons in one: the

bodily, the mental and the spiritual man. Events may separate us in body from our friends—only we ourselves can sever their higher selves from ours. In the same way it lies in our own power to continue real relations with those we call the dead, not by unsatisfying "spirit raising," but in fact. "Thoughts are things" is a forcible way of saying that our minds affect ourselves and others, in ways that we know not of. Any thought of intercourse is a sort of intercourse.

Thoughts certainly are the cause of things that happen. Every work originates with a thought, and when we have imagined anything we have taken at least the first step toward making it real to us. Before he can give us any tangible product, the artist, the inventor, the builder, must get some mental picture which in many cases may be indicated only by a few streaks of color on a note-book; or again may be worked out with measure to the smallest detail in full scale drawings.

Thoughts force themselves upon us that make our heart strings snap; we can bring

about at will an emotional condition or call up mental pictures that make us weep. On the other hand we can "cheer up" by recalling pleasant things, and in so doing we can cheer others who depend upon us. We know how courage and happiness attract others to us just as nervousness or depression repel them and we have no reason to believe that souls are less influenced by our mental states merely because they have passed out of the visible body.

To believe this were so, would be to contradict all the recognized laws of nature. The one who has passed on loves us and wants us to be happy always and under all circumstances. His want is his command to us to be happy. As Young says: "He mourns the dead who lives as they desire."

If we believe that loving is the only true living, and that the happiness of others is our own real happiness, we cannot believe that he who has passed on into the larger life will love less than we love, or understand happiness less than we.

Give glad welcome to his loving thoughts

that come to us as ours still go to him.

If we fail in this, we may, by shutting up our hearts and minds, be depriving ourselves of the comfort or solace the loved one is endeavoring to send us. Or we may be preventing that loved one from getting all possible joy from his new experience.

We try to divine the wishes of the dead in respect to those things they have left behind forever. We try to carry out those wishes and to dispose of their things as they would have liked. That is natural and good and no one has any reason to think that the dead do not know nor care. We love to visit the grave and to make it attractive; we yearn to revisit the places familiar to those whom we love; we dwell upon the things they said, recalling the intonation of the voice, the expression of the face, the gestures of the body. We do this because it makes us feel near to them again and that nearness brings some happiness. We cannot think that they do not feel near to us also; we know they do, for we feel them so close to us we think we

might almost touch them. If they are near to us, then we should make the companionship pleasant to them, not invite them to sadness. "The butterfly wings that must carry us to them are our thoughts, our tears but wet the wings." We chill our spirits, blind our eyes, deafen our ears by our depression, our tears and our lamentations. If we darken the windows of our soul and bar the door, how can the spirit of light and healing enter in?

That the dead have "gone from us" that they are "the departed" may or may not be true, but there is no obligation whatever to believe it and in our own experience we find every reason to disbelieve it. We feel certain that our departed are at least not miserable. There are only two places in the Jewish sacred book that seem to point to any separate abode for the living and the dead (Is. xxxiii. 14, Dan. xii. 2), unless David's "I shall go to him but he shall not come to me," (II Sam. xii. 23) be construed to mean more than that he would follow the child to the grave.

The New Testament according to our version seems in some parts to teach that heaven and hell are places, places being used as symbols, but Jesus' teaching was:

The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

MATT. xxi. 43.

The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

MATT. x. 7.

Verily I say unto you that there be some of them that stand here which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached and every man presseth into it.

LUKE xvi. 16.

Neither shall they say, Lo, here! or lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

LUKE xvii. 21.

REGRETS

It would be a poor result of all our anguish and our wrestling, if we won nothing but our old selves at the end of it.

. . . Let us rather be thankful that our sorrow lives in us as an indestructible force, only changing its form as forces do, and passing from pain to sympathy—the one word which includes all our best insight and our best love.

GEORGE ELIOT: *Adam Bede.*

CHAPTER III

REGRETS

Some of our grief comes from vain regrets. We reproach ourselves with mistakes or thoughtlessness or unkindness to the one who has passed away, and we torture ourselves thinking how differently we would do if we had the chance again. We probably would: but that shows only how much we have learned, and perhaps we had never learned it but for this sorrow. All experience tends to development, else life would be meaningless. As Browning says "Why stay we on the earth except to grow?"

Suppose a person did the best he could at the time,—at least did the best he knew. Being such a person as he was, and feeling and thinking as he felt then, he did what seemed to him proper and wise. It was an error, inconsiderate, harsh. True:

but in those circumstances, with such limited experience, with such knowledge and affection as he had then, he did what he was moved to do. Now, in the light of new circumstances, with the experience of the error, he would do quite differently. Shall we then be angry with him, or say "Raca," that is to say "thou fool," because he knew no better and could do no better? Nay, rather we should remember, as Epictetus says: "This man who errs is deceived concerning things of the greatest moment. He is blind, not to the difference between black and white, but to the difference between Good and Evil. . . . It is the greatest misfortune to be deprived of the most important things, and the most important thing to every man is a will such as he ought to have, and if one be deprived of this, we should not be indignant with him." Their evil deeds, which spring from ignorance, should not chill our kindness to the afflicted.

If we hold the right relation to others, we know that what we must do for the one who has done wrong, is to show him the

way to do better and to help him. Weakness is often simple lack of knowledge. If you or I have knowledge it is the more necessary that we should use it to help our ignorant brother to see the better way. We should not reproach those for weakness who have not yet become strong. So with ourselves. If to-day we have more understanding, it is not meet we should judge ourselves harshly for the things done yesterday when we had less understanding.

The wise trainer does not scold his athlete because he could not run a hundred yards in ten seconds last year: rather he commends him that with practice and with better training he has improved so much. The treatment for ourselves is not to waste our energy in vain regrets, but to admit our weakness and going on from strength to strength to avail ourselves of new conditions, of the lessons and failures of the past. "The best repentance is to be up and doing for righteousness."

We have a lingering feeling that somehow it is well to make ourselves unhappy with regret, that only through mourning

can we show repentance. In reality that is pleasing or helpful neither to God nor man. When we mourn over what we did that was lacking in tenderness, we are really blaming ourselves for what would still be the only possible action for us, were it not for the very tenderness we have acquired through our loss.

As Marcus Aurelius says: "If men are in the wrong, it is because they know no better. They are under the necessity of their ignorance. For as no soul is voluntarily deprived of truth so none would offend against good morals if they were rightly aware of it," and "Why should I vex myself that never willingly vexed anybody?"

What is it that we regret? The pain we gave? Neither we, nor anyone else can give fruitless pain: if the Spirit of Life is kind, there can be no unprofitable pain. Every experience teaches some lesson. The life of each person develops us; and nothing is useless or unneeded in its place. You and I are not gods that we can disarrange the benign order of the Universe.

We suffer to-day because yesterday we were callous or hard, when were it not for such suffering, we should continue to be just as hard; and we must not forget that the occurrence, in its way, was just as useful to the one whom we ignorantly abused, as it is now to us.

We can give people only the experience they need, for, says Marcus Aurelius again, "Wickedness generally does no harm to the universe, so too in particular subjects, it does no harm to anyone."—"If a man has done amiss the mischief is to himself." If the circumstances arise again we shall choose the better way. And they will arise again and again, and if we have learned the lesson, we shall know how to be wiser and kinder and so to avoid the mischief. We have learned now as George Eliot says that "When death, the great Reconciler, has come, it is never our tenderness we repent of but our severity."

We think now that we will never be unkind again. But will we not? Has the lesson been at last sharp enough to teach us? For if it is not learned yet, be assured

that we shall have to learn it in some harder way. If it has been "learned by heart" it is one thing to be grateful for. Could it have been learned with lesser pain? No, for we did not learn it until now. Yet there must have been opportunity before though we did not recognize it.

It is not enough never to be unkind again; if we have learned that, it is well: but it is only half the lesson: hereafter we must be always kind. There are many persons dependent upon our action or upon our thought, some whose whole life is colored by our example. This moment we can put the teaching of our sorrow into practice in our relations with them, so that instead of making them unhappy by our grief, we may help them by our cheerful fortitude. We may be a source of inspiration to them by our very manner of expressing the lesson we have learned.

We torment ourselves by saying "If only we had done so and so," or we blame others saying "If somebody had not done that, this would not have happened." Maybe it would not, but we cannot know what else,

perhaps much harder to bear, would have happened in consequence of our different course. Very likely we blundered because we went to that place, or did thus and so, or allowed some other to do something. Maybe we erred in sending for that doctor or for not sending soon enough or because we might have called in another earlier to consult. We need not be afraid to admit any of these things, nor need we try to argue ourselves out of them, or to convince others that they are not so, and that no different course could or would have produced different results.

Maybe you are regretting now that you did or did not do certain things, which wrong course of yours or of some one's caused the present calamity. You are grieving because your unhappiness is the result of past error or inexperience, which may be true. But is it not at least partly the result of present error, the wrong way you look at things?

For one error we made, for one unkindness that we did, we avoided a thousand errors, for one harsh word we gave a

thousand kisses. It is futile then to say, "If I had only known I would have done so and so." "How could I have said that?" "I reproach myself for doing such a thing." *If* you had known you would have done that—but you didn't know.

You have known of others who in their first woe thought and felt just as you do now. Afterwards some of them came to look at it differently, "time" we say, "brought saner views." Mere time does nothing to heal, it is only whatever changes take place in our thoughts that bring the saner view.

Happiness depends as much to-day on right thoughts about the past, as it did at that time on right action. We have always to learn better before we could do better. We learn by experience,—all experiences, and sorrow is the greatest experience of all. It is true that if we had known, without learning, all that we have learned from our experience and from our loss, we would have done quite differently. The grandchildren of our flesh will be wiser than we, as the grandchildren of our minds

will be wiser, but we cannot be wiser this moment than we are at this moment.

People who use phrases without wisdom, sometimes talk of suffering as a mystery. A mystery is something whose use and purpose we cannot understand, it is always hard to endure. We shall gain but little so long as we regard suffering as "a mystery," for mysteries are beyond the control of the known laws that govern life. We have but to consider the effect of suffering upon ourselves to learn that instead of being a mystery it is really a revelation. One discerns things one never discerned before, and understands what had previously seemed mysterious.

Goethe wrote:

> Who never ate his bread in sorrow,
> Who never spent the midnight hours
> Weeping, and waiting for the morrow,
> He knows you not, ye heavenly powers. *
>
> GOETHE: *Wilhelm Meister.*

* Given in *De Profundis*, by Oscar Wilde. Probably translated by Carlyle.

THE MEDICAMENT OF GRIEF

The only cure for grief is action.
George Henry Lewes: *The Spanish Drama*, Ch. II.

CHAPTER IV

THE MEDICAMENT OF GRIEF

We are accustomed to say that our dear one was "taken away," that "God took him" and that our beloved "are not given to us, but only lent." If this were our real belief, if it appealed to our inner understanding of life as true, we should feel less resentment and no bitterness when the loan was recalled. It would not be natural then for us to feel that there was any injustice in our affliction. It is because these sayings, with which we try to ease our aching hearts, do not ring true that they bring us no comfort.

It would be far more correct to say that in the course of Nature the dear one passed on, that in kindness the ill-suited body was destroyed, that the needless flesh was thrown aside, as the runner throws off his coat. The runner, equipped for a race,

may need a cloak before the contest is really on, or even when he first starts, but as he progresses the weight of the cloak hinders his speed. The body is to the spirit what the cloak is to the runner, the means whereby it consciously presses towards the mark of its high calling. It is both wise and natural that it should cast aside that body when it begins to impede progress.

Take any instance of the death of some young person not your own, about whom you really know, and consider whether, knowing as much as you do, knowing perhaps better than anyone else the circumstances—consider whether those circumstances were such as would better have been continued.

You have heard, perhaps of some handsome, clever lad, an only son, with the gift of gentleness, nervous and sensitive and emotional, and with plenty of money; lacking if in anything, in will power, and naturally even as a child, adored by women. His death seems untimely and tragic—but does it seem to you with your

knowledge, that his circumstances, as the delicate and petted child of wealthy parents, were likely to educate him to a higher and better life? Love could wish only what is best for him.

Here is a beautiful and fascinating girl, born to poverty, obliged at an early age to go to work in a department store. Her parents are already well on in life. We ask "Why should the young and lovely be suddenly snatched away?" but we seldom ask "snatched away—from what?" And we hardly ever think that equally unexpected ills might have come to those so dear to us.

There may well be cases where everything in such a life still seemed to be for the best—everything except the tragedy of the end—where apparently things would have continued happily if some wicked force had not interfered. Perhaps you think that there really is an evil power, which sometimes successfully opposes the good in the universe. Well, if there is such a power, should you blame your God that what you think a dreadful misfortune

came upon you? You do not blame gravitation if you fall over a cliff, you do not even blame yourself if you tripped over an unseen root. You recognize that it is all the working out of law.

If, however, there is anything in the world which evil can not stand against, then all that seems to us so bad must eventually work out for good.*

We seldom think of death as "natural." When we do speak of a "natural death" or "death due to natural causes" we mean death through the decay of old age. But all death is "natural." A look at the forest or at the garden will show us that it is just as natural for the young and strong or the immature to die. In a great gale not only are the hoary old monarchs of the forest destroyed, but the vigorous young trees and the slender saplings in which lie the hope of a future forest, are alike uprooted, or they may be blackened and burned by the lightning's blaze.

* If you wish to examine the proofs of that, see J. Wm. Lloyd's *Life's Beautiful Battle*. There would be no use in my restating the argument of that beautiful book.

All change is "natural" whether gradual or sudden,—that is, it lies within the laws of Nature, otherwise there is no law. Nothing in Nature assures us that the immature will come to maturity.

It is untrue that it is more natural for the old to die than for the young. Even under the best conditions far more of the young of every kind die, than of the mature. Physicians say, "children live pretty persistently after three years of age;" before that they flicker out helplessly like a flame.

The tables and statistics of "expectation of life" used by the insurance companies show that even at 10 years of age there are more deaths than out of an equal number of persons between the ages of 10 and 38 years. The percentage of deaths under 10 years of age is still greater. It is in fact the tremendous mortality among children which makes the death rate for the whole population so high. In 1907 out of about 687,000 deaths at all ages, over

one-fourth (183,774) were of children under 5 years old. How great an effect must that rate have upon the general average of 15 deaths in each year per 1,000 persons.*

The young and tender flower or crop is the uncertain one: the plant grows strong as it grows big. The gardener deliberately destroys quantities of shoots and plants that are not strong enough. If we had made the universe we would have arranged it differently perhaps, and made the death of the young impossible, but it might not be any improvement over the plan of creation.

It's easy to find fault with plans we don't know anything about. I remember once watching an excavator loosen the

* In the year 1909 over 140,000 infants under one year of age died in the United States: the total deaths were about 687,000.

In New York City in 1911 about one death in five was of babies under one year old. That is natural, the ordinary course of nature. The number could be vastly decreased by better conditions and more intelligent care; but the *proportion* would continue to show a huge excess of mortality in the very young.

earth from the top of a bank and when it fell to the level, shovelling it up again into the carts.

I said, "Why don't you back up the cart to the side of the bank and let the earth fall directly into the cart, instead of throwing it down and then shovelling it up again?" He said, "That dirt falling would break any cart that ever was made."

The world is very complicated and its parts have reached a balance through countless ages of experiment. The power that "spreadeth out the North over empty space and hangeth the worlds upon nothing" may have arranged the world better than even we could do it,—better than we can even understand it.

The weak, the tender, the immature appeal most strongly to us; by their very helplessness they twine themselves most around our hearts, and in that appeal may lift us up from selfishness to selflessness. But when that is done, it may be that their work here is finished. For the greater good of all men, a good expressed only in

the growth and strengthening of the race, it may well be that their passing on is necessary. As the chain is no stronger than its weakest link, so the race inherits the weakness of its most helpless member. It were folly to increase the strength of additional links if the one weak link is not removed. The link may be more delicate and beautiful than any of the others, but it is not fit for the work the chain must do. In some other chain it may suit perfectly.

So it may be with the frail, delicate child or adult. If not fitted to aid further in the work and progress of the race, so that the progress may not be unduly hampered, wise Nature transfers the loved one to another life where he can serve much better.

"Why then," we ask, "are they born at all?" Because it is more important that our affections and our helpfulness should be strengthened than that we should all be physically strong. It is the weak and ailing that have taught us love. And having taught us that, their work is done. It rests with us to say how well done.

You approve of Nature in the mountain, the forest, the flower, the bird, and sneer at man and his works as artificial; but man is as natural when you view him with enough perspective, as a stream of water, though he is above the flower or the bird in development, and it is only because you are a part of him, torn by all the pangs of his transitions, that you do him irreverence and despite. . . . If you get down close to the beasts and the plants you will find there, among them, weakness, disease, sin, ugliness, struggle, decay, death, just as with men, according to the plane of life and growth. "Distance lends enchantment," but everywhere "evil" is present and at work, and everywhere evil is compelling or coaxing present good into higher life and growth.

J. Wm. Lloyd: *Life's Beautiful Battle.*

There are only two ways in which you could have been saved this grief—either that the loved one had not passed on to the larger life, leaving behind forever the conditions the spirit no longer needed; or that you had never had the loved one in your life. Would you wish that the one you have lost had never been born at all? Would you blot out all the joy or even all the anxiety your child has given

you? The loving care, the demands made upon your time, your strength, your thought—would you choose that none of these had been?

Yet selfish grief means that we would prefer either that the loved one had never lived, or else that he continue to live under conditions unsuited to his own development. How can we reconcile such grief with love? If it were not for our belief that we ought to grieve and the pressure of other minds that expect us to be sad, we should mourn less, but would express our feelings in ways helpful to those still around us. Not that we should not weep to relieve overcharged feelings, to ease the pain of loneliness which we cannot overcome. That is natural and right.

A child wails when its toy is crushed; so we cry at first when our treasure is taken away. With our larger conception of the relative value of life's gifts, our pain is no greater than the child's and he instinctively eases his pain by tears. Why should we not? Indeed it is well when we do,—any expression of feeling helps to divert the pain.

Expression is life—repression is death, or at least it is poison. The grief that finds no outlet, like the anger that smoulders in our hearts, beclouds the reason, distorts the nature, poisons every relation of life. We writhe when a nerve is touched; we groan when a limb is crushed, and if we could not move or make a sound the agony would be harder to bear. To try to suppress the natural expression of our feeling brings a new nervous strain. Accordingly it is useless to endeavor to keep one quiet who is terribly disturbed. "Control yourself" is useless and hopeless advice; the effort is needful only when the paroxysm of grief itself becomes dangerous.

Your friends tell you to "get interested in something." If you do not resent the advice it is only because you understand that their intentions are good, that this advice is "chaff well meant for grain." You feel that you cannot get up an interest in things, for everything seems so trivial. Nor do you need to do it. What could you hope to accomplish that would help you or your fellows, if your only

motive were an attempt to "get interested in things?"

Here are thousands of your brothers and sisters living in misery that a little effort of yours might help to relieve. But it must be a loving effort—an effort made because your heart cries out to help them, to lessen their suffering. You must feel their woe as yours and follow the natural instinct to relieve suffering by some activity. It is not enough that because *you* are unhappy you turn to them as "something you might get interested in." That is not much better than any diversion, such as card-playing.

If you really desire to do something to ease, not only *your* pain, but the aggregate of pain that you now perhaps for the first time perceive is in the world, you will have no time to think whether your precious self is "interested" or not. "Doe ye nexte thynge," as the old Saxon adage puts it, and you will waste no time pitying yourself. Then you will understand what John Bright understood when he wrote:

I was in the depths of grief, I might almost say of despair, for the light and sunshine of my house had been extinguished. All that was left on earth of my young wife, except the memory of a sainted life and of a brief happiness, was lying still and cold in the chamber above us. Mr. Cobden called upon me as a friend, and addressed me, as you might suppose, with words of condolence. After a time he looked up and said: "There are thousands of houses in England at this moment where wives, mothers and children are dying of hunger, hunger made by the laws. Now," he said, "when the first paroxysm of your grief is passed, come with me, and we will never rest till those laws are repealed." I accepted his invitation.

DIVERTING OUR THOUGHTS

Human longings are perversely obstinate; and to the man whose mouth is watering for a peach, it is of no use to offer the largest vegetable marrow.

George Eliot: *Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story.*

CHAPTER V

DIVERTING OUR THOUGHTS

THE use of emotion is to stir us to action. We know that when we feel joy we are moved to action; we instinctively do something for others and in that doing add to our own enjoyment. Spontaneous, willing service for others always makes us happy, because in our inner consciousness we know that there are really no "others," but all are one. The vague feeling that "I am he and he is I" prompts us to do, and in the doing we learn the truth and the wisdom of the feeling.

Grief should have the same helpful and ennobling effect, by stirring us to real action. We should not sink into lethargy or think that perhaps reading will "help us to forget." A novel may stir the emotions so that we feel moved to do something, but because the situations are un-

real, however realistic they may seem, they allow of nothing to be done in consequence of the feeling aroused. The emotion energizes us for action, but that energy is wasted, because it has no outlet. It does not ease our pain or bring us any peace. On the contrary it creates restlessness and dissatisfaction. Moreover, to dwell constantly, or even frequently in the realm of fiction, puts us out of comprehending touch with the world of reality about us.

After all there is nothing that we truly wish the reading to help us to forget. We would not forget the joy we had; we would not willingly forget the pain we suffered, because to be able to forget it would be the same as forgetting him for whom we felt it. What we really want is to ease the intensity of the pain, the weight of our depression, but know not how to go about it. We fear to take up our normal life again, it is so full of reminders.

That only proves death cannot really separate persons, the loved ones are not wholly gone, for we have them with us in our hearts. Their presence, their thoughts,

their likings and desires,—their souls as we say—still influence us. "Our dead are never dead to us until we have forgotten them: they can be injured by us, they can be wounded; they know all our penitence, all our aching sense that their place is empty, all the kisses we bestow on the smallest relic of their presence." *

Would we have it otherwise? Is not all our sorrow because we have lost their physical presence? Rightly considered, the constant memory of them, the daily reminders, would be a joy to us. We do find comfort in doing things for their dear sakes, in recalling their plans and hopes, in conjuring up images of them when some pleasure had made them radiate joy and gladness. We dwell upon their loving words and acts to us, and find a joy in doing it.

The nun and the monk think it the highest bliss to have their saint always in their minds, to have that saint's thoughts and actions influence every thought and action of the devotee. It seems to draw

* George Eliot: *Adam Bede.*

them nearer together, almost to pierce the "veil of flesh" that separates them. So may we find joy, not in forgetting our dead, but in loving remembrance. We get less and less hurt from the daily reminders until the pain is swallowed up: the glorified dead hours arise again and the word is made flesh to us. The saying of one who knows what trouble means is

"I have learned especially, to take willingly whatever strain or duty comes to me, and to get all the experience there is in it, joyfully.

"When I have trouble or sorrow I keep quiet, live a normal life and leave it to the Spirit. It is none of my affair, except to see what it means—what I have to learn; then the Spirit lifts up the difficulty and carries it away."

You think, maybe you say, that *you* cannot feel that way, that you are weak and insignificant. A study of Mental Science would help anyone who thinks that.

Where did you get such strength as you have? Was it from yourself or from the universal Life? If we could be born and exist without the Life force we might

think of ourselves as separate from it and weak. Heat, magnetism, electricity, cohesion, all the great forces of the physical world find their expression in your body. You are "allied with the forces of gravitation." Attraction, persuasion, reason, all the forces that influence mind, because they are mind, go to make you You. Emotion, enthusiasm, love are expressed in your soul. You can do nothing of yourself, but you have all the power of the universe to draw upon.

If you talk of your "feeble efforts" transpose this and see how absurd it is—"the feeble efforts that the Spirit makes through you."

IDEAL LOVE

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight
Can touch him not and torture not again;
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown gray in vain;
Nor when the spirit's self has ceased to burn
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

SHELLEY: *Adonais.*

CHAPTER VI

IDEAL LOVE

THE love that centers all on one individual, or on one pursuit, is above all loves intense, it almost intoxicates with joy; but it carries the greatest certainty of suffering and susceptibility to pain. It is also the most narrowing, and is from any point of view the least desirable, although it is the romantic love of early verse, the love that is still idealized in novel and poem. To center all on one individual is to lose all if that one be taken away. To see but one joy is to reject all the other joys of life, or to get very little from them. If our love is a selfish love, we would better find it out at once to correct it—as it cannot last. This sort of love is likely to restrict its object to our own ways—we think, as we devote to that one person all our time and love we should know the

best paths for him to walk in—and we expect him to be guided by our words. We are more sure of this because we believe that all our thought is for his good, when he seems to be taking no thought. Perhaps he sees it is not worth while. He goes calmly along, doing what he must do, led by his own spirit, in the only way he *can* go, while we agonize that he does not go our way. We are not willing that he should work out his own salvation, as he must and finally does, in spite of our agonizing. We think this is loving.

There is a world in one of the far-off stars, and things do not happen there as they happen here.

In that world were a man and woman; they had one work, and they walked together side by side on many days, and were friends—and that is a thing that happens now and then in this world also.

But there was something in that star-world that there is not here. There was a thick wood; where the trees grew closest, and the stems were interlocked, and the sun never shone; there stood a shrine. At night, when the stars shone or the moon glinted on the tree-tops, and all was quiet, if one crept here quite

alone and knelt on the steps of the stone altar, and uncovering one's breast, so wounded it that the blood fell down on the altar steps, then whatever he who knelt there wished for was granted him.

Now, the man and woman walked together; and the woman wished well to the man. One night when the moon was shining so that the leaves of all the trees glinted, and the waves of the sea were silvery, the woman walked alone to the forest. It was dark there; the moonlight fell only in little flecks on the dead leaves under her feet, and the branches were knotted tight overhead. Farther in it got darker, not even a fleck of moonlight shone. Then she came to the shrine; she knelt down before it and prayed; there came no answer. Then she uncovered her breast; with a sharp two-edged stone that lay there she wounded it. The drops dripped slowly down on to the stone, and a voice cried, "What do you seek?"

She answered, "There is a man; I hold him nearer than anything. I would give him the best of all blessings."

The voice said, "What is it?"

The girl said, "I know not, but that which is most good for him I wish him to have."

The voice said, "Your prayer is answered; he shall have it."

Then she stood up. She covered her breast

and held the garment tight upon it with her hand, and ran out of the forest, and the dead leaves fluttered under her feet. Out in the moonlight the soft air was blowing, and the sand glittered on the beach. She ran along the smooth shore, then suddenly she stood still. Out across the water there was something moving. She shaded her eyes and looked. It was a boat; it was sliding swiftly over the moonlit water out to sea. One stood upright in it; the face the moonlight did not show, but the figure she knew. It was passing swiftly; it seemed as if no one propelled it; the moonlight's shimmer did not let her see clearly, and the boat was far from shore, but it seemed almost as if there was another figure sitting in the stern. Faster and faster it glided over the water away, away. She ran along the shore; she came no nearer it. The garment she had held fluttered open; she stretched out her arms, and the moonlight shone on her long loose hair.

Then a voice beside her whispered, "What is it?"

She cried, "With my blood I bought the best of all gifts for him. I have come to bring it him! He is going from me!"

The voice whispered softly, "Your prayer was answered. It has been given him."

She cried, "What is it?"

The voice answered, "It is that he might leave you."

The girl stood still.

Far out at sea the boat was lost to sight beyond the moonlight sheen.

The voice spoke softly, "Art thou contented?"

She said, "I am contented."

At her feet the waves broke in long ripples softly on the shore.

OLIVE SCHREINER: *In a Far-Off World.*

The love that radiates to all is without passion, steady and constant in gentle happiness, clear-eyed to virtue and to fault. It is the love that makes it possible to accept our loss without despair; it does not prevent the pain and shock, but it helps us to bear them with courage. It can also help you to help others who are weak.

You have had a frightful shock. I know how hard it is. Uncounted millions of others have suffered in the same way. There are some whose despair at their loss is not because they are so loving, but because they love so little. Some one called forth whatever love they had and returned it; now death has taken that one away:

alas, no one now calls forth any love from them, and they are thrown back on themselves. It is really a light and trivial nature that cherishes its own grief, because it knows nothing better to cherish.

There are some who despair because they have lost the only person whom they loved, and now have no one to share their pleasures or their pains. Surely, they may find others who are in the same condition and who need to share and to be shared with, to teach and to be taught.

If this sorrow is teaching us the right lesson it will lead us to seek out the despairing, to help them to love again by warming their hearts with our love. A simple test as to whether our sorrow is good and noble, or selfish and base is whether it helps or hinders our usefulness to others.

"But," you say, "it is no comfort to me that another has suffered." This seems true at first, but if we will linger on the thought a moment, and remember our neighbor, a woman perhaps, who suffered in the same way a little while ago, we do lose some of the sharpness of our own pain

in the understanding sympathy which we may now extend to her. Until now, we may have felt a bit impatient with her, her somber aspect and black garments after a time became irritating. Is it possible this suffering was needed to teach the simple lesson of tolerance?

Some have given up and have sunk under just this sort of suffering. What sorrow for the one who has just passed on, if he knows (and we have no proof that he does not), that we are wrecked by his loss. What a joy to him if we live on undistraught, using the newly acquired lessons, the larger sympathy, all of which he has directly given us, to be helpful to others. Could we do more for him?

GRIEVING FOR OURSELVES

O hapless Vase!
And how doth it befall
Thy cast-out fragments
so much scent enclose?
This sweetness is not
of myself at all,
But once, O Sa'di,
once I held a Rose.
Blest lot! With me a
sweetness also stays;
It scents the chamber
of my dreams, and strows
With happy, perfumed
memories my days;
Keeps life abloom.
I, too, once held a rose.

JAMES TERRY WHITE: *For Lovers and Others.*

CHAPTER VII

GRIEVING FOR OURSELVES

We must not make others sad with our sorrow: Oscar Wilde wrote from his prison:

> I see it would be both ungrateful and unkind of me to pull so long a face that when my friends came to see me they would have to make their faces still longer in order to show their sympathy."
>
> *De Profundis.*

You are indulging your sorrow and you feel that you are entitled to do it. Most persons at least in their first grief do not wish to be comforted. But there are others whose sorrow you make deeper by showing yours. In helping them, you will find the best help for yourself. Dante places low in the Inferno those who wilfully live in sadness.

You can nourish your grief indefinitely

and make yourself a kill-joy and a black blot on the landscape wherever you go, or you can go nowhere lest you should be a wet blanket on life; you can be useless on account of your sorrow; but that is not fine feeling, nor tenderness, nor intensity, nor a deep nature, nor sensitiveness; it is plain selfishness, though your friends may tell you that you are showing every tender sentiment they can think of.

If you are poor or pressed by affairs so that you have to work at once, even if your loss brings responsibilities and anxieties that seem hard, that are hard, you may be glad, for these things are the best balm in your terrible trouble.

When you have had enough of grieving remember that the world is weeping too for need of just such help as you can give; The Settlements, the Educational Alliances, the Civic Societies, Conservation, Anti-tuberculosis, the Suffrage Movement, or Anti Suffrage,—or of more radical movements, the Ferrer Schools, Socialism, Anarchy, Single Tax. All these want help

or maybe need correction or opposition. There is work for every hand: the battle calls for every sword.

There may be nothing more in the world for you, but there is much in you for the world.

We can make this terrible sorrow of use to others or we can keep it for ourselves: if we allow it to drive us to helping others it will soften our hearts and the hearts of others; it will be easy to bear. If we let it prey upon our own hearts it will harden them and be hard to bear; grief may carry us to a higher life; there it will find relief, or it may crush us, according to the way we direct it.

You say you will "go mad;" that is just the right expression; we cannot suppress our grief, we may go mad if we let mourning drive us mad. Grief drives no one out of his mind; thinking of one's self does that; to become self-centered is the road to insanity. You can easily let yourself slip down. You say, No, you want to die because there is no longer any reason for you to live. Robert Louis Stevenson says,

that no one is useless while he has a friend. Is there for you no

Cause that lacks assistance or wrong that needs resistance.

Life here on the whole is good, else men would long ago have left it, for the doors from life are many and they stand wide open. We may still find good in this world and we must believe that beyond the grave is also good.

We hardly grieve for the dead because they did not want to go: to the ill and to the aged, death is like falling asleep: it comes "kissing down tired eyelids on tired eyes" and for the very young, it can hold no terrors. But even if we know that those who have passed on did not wish to leave these scenes, there is no proof that they do leave them; and if they do leave them, there is no reason to think that they go to any less happy condition. Possibly the sight of our grief might make them unwilling to leave us.

We do not believe that our dead have gone to a less happy world. On the con-

trary, the whole thought of the sane world is that the dead go to happiness. No thinking person seriously believes in hell, though many of the churches have deliberately taught that life is bad and that death is worse. All funeral services are sorrowful and most of them gloomy and full of heathen pessimism. "Man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live and is full of misery." If we really thought this, we should be glad when those we loved passed on, and no one would find us inconsolable, weeping because our dear one was no longer bearing the burden of living.

We grieve for those who are gone, that is a manifestation of our selfishness, for we never think that they may be sad because they leave us sorrowful and that they may grieve the more to see us crushed.

Here and there some poet cries out a warning not to nourish sorrow; since it may be that—

> Our loved grieve with our grieving, cruel we
> To cherish selfishness of woe. The chance
> Should keep us steadfast. Tortured utterly

This hope alone in all the world's expanse
We clutch forlornly; how deep love can be
Grief's silence proving more than utterance.
ARLO BATES.

In our hearts we know, that the dead but sleep, that they are at rest, in peace; that, as in a happy dream, they are freed from the limitations of matter, time and space; that they have come into a larger life and a fuller understanding.

It is the practical neglect of this truth which we really know that makes place for Spiritualism, those outside the church, as always, bringing the food that she has failed to offer.

THE COURSE OF NATURE

Like Autumn, kind and brief—
The frost that chills the branches, frees the leaf:—

Like Winter's stormy hours
That spread their fleece of snow to save the flowers:—

The lordliest of all things—
Life lends us only feet, Death gives us wings!

Fearing no covert thrust,
Let me walk onward, armed with valiant trust,

Dreading no unseen knife,
Across Death's threshold step from life to life!

O all ye frightened folk,
Whether ye wear a crown or bear a yoke,

Laid in one equal bed,
When once your coverlet of grass is spread,

What daybreak need you fear?
The love will rule you there which guides you here!

Where Life, the Sower, stands,
Scattering the ages from his swinging hands,

Thou waitest, Reaper lone,
Until the multitudinous grain hath grown.

Scythe-bearer, when thy blade
Harvests my flesh, let me be unafraid!

FREDERIC LAWRENCE KNOWLES: *Love Triumphant.*

CHAPTER VIII

THE COURSE OF NATURE

"WHAT shadows we are and what shadows we pursue." So long as our minds are dark we are shadows that even darken the place of our abode. But with the Illumination, we shall become lights instead of shadows, going on to the more perfect day.

It is a comforting thought that we are but the reflections or indications, the manifestations as it were, at this time and place, of the spirit of life. Religion, not dogma, teaches us that. Many persons are without devout superstitions; no one is without a religion whether he calls it ethical religion or natural religion or rationalism, he has his idea of the Cosmos —the Order of Nature.

As Marcus Aurelius divined: "No one thing is foreign or unrelated to another. This general connection gives unity and

ornament to the world. For the world, take it altogether, is but one. There is but one sort of matter to make it of; . . . and one law to guide it, the common reason of all rational beings—"

Science teaches the same thing. Says Prof. William Osler: (*Science and Immortality*)

The individual is nothing more than a transient off-shoot of a germ plasm, which continues unbrokenly from generation to generation, from age to age. This marvelous embryonic substance is eternally young, eternally productive, eternally forming new individuals to grow up and to perish, while it remains in its offspring always youthful, always increasing, always the same.

Thousands upon thousands of generations which have arisen in the course of ages were its products, but it lives on in the youngest generations with the power of giving origin to coming millions. The individual is transient, but its embryonic substance, which produces the mortal tissues, preserves itself imperishable, everlasting, and constant.*

* Quoted by Beard, *Review of Neurology and Psychiatry*, Jan., 1904.

We know much about life but we know not what life is, nor has any man fathomed that mystery. Shall we ever until we plunge into its depths? Hear a parable concerning it:

"In a strange country I sat by the roadside heavy with grief. Then along the way three maidens danced, their arms intertwined, their eyes aflame, all beautiful as the sunlight.

" 'Oh, radiant ones,' I cried, 'who are you?'

"They answered softly, 'We are called Life and Love and Death.'

" 'But whither go you?'

" 'We know not,' they answered.

" 'And which is Life, which Love, and which is Death?' I cried again.

" 'Ah,' answered they, 'that we do not know,' and they twined their arms more lovingly.

"Joy flamed in their eyes, so I arose and went with them."

For love, the attraction of male and female, of man to woman and woman to man, particle to particle, of plant to soil and of both to water, is what makes up solid matter, whether it be our bodies or celestial bodies. It is the origin of life,

and life again manifests and perpetuates itself through love, and they turn and change through death.

Love is the rebirth of life: the love unions of male and female produce it; the unions of particles with one another give it body, the union of the child with food continues it; the union of the blood with the digested nourishment develops it, and again in the maturing person union with another comes—else life could not continue. Life and love merge into each other; they are one. Death is a necessary part of life, for life cannot continue without change. Death is as necessary to the course of life as birth—each is but a change of state.

Life is not measured by the calendar, that measures only the revolutions of the suns and other unimportant things. Life is measured by thought and feeling. When we feel deeply or think hard, we live much because we experience much.

Children pass on when they have learned all that they can receive, often because they have distanced their parents in de-

velopment. We say sometimes, "He was too good for this world." The Ancients said, "Whom the gods love die young," that was not peculiarly because they thought this world evil, but because they saw that the beautiful finished tool goes from the polishing room into the Builder's hands.

People tell you of worse afflictions than yours, as if there could be worse and human sensibility still feel them. One atom more of suffering must deaden all power to suffer. They would never try to console a patient with ear-ache by telling him that he should be thankful that both ears do not ache and his teeth too.

Yet there is a queer comfort in that also. If people have had worse agonies and have still lived to be of use, why, so may you.

The limit to pain from any one cause is quite definite: after a certain point it produces numbness or unconsciousness, sometimes a certain ecstasy. Excess of pain means death, yet we would not choose to be without sensibility, for that too is

death. So long as we can live, our pain is not greater than we can bear, and it will become so only if we do not recognize its use.

If you touch your finger to a hot iron, the pain makes you draw it back; but it does more, it makes you put oil on the burn and even make a shield so that the evil shall not occur again. If you had no pain you would let your fingers burn and blister, until, perhaps too late for a cure, you found them crippled. If there were no pain, we would not have made guards or defences against such injuries. Just so, if there were no weakness and death we should have nothing to spur us into taking care of our children and of other people's children and of ourselves. Feeling and emotion, pain and pleasure, these are what prompt us to action, the things that move life. That is what they are for.

We must consider how each of us has an instinct that fights against death, either of others close to us or of ourselves. If men had no such instinct, they would have struggled little to ward off death and

to preserve life. Primitive men could not have lived at all had it not been for the fear and sorrow of death. Those individuals who had little of that feeling, did in fact, take insufficient care of their friends or relations and of themselves. Accordingly, being less careful to provide means of living and to avoid causes of death, they died earlier than others who were anxious to escape death; and so they left fewer or no offspring. Those of our ancestors with the overpowering desire of life made vigorous efforts and strong defenses—and lived. They lived and left children who inherited the same desire of life for themselves and for others. Each generation gifted with grief for those who died, was impelled more and more to strive against such death. It is the suffering that is associated with death and the sorrow at its occurrence that still make us strive for safer and better conditions.

THE CHANGELESS CHANGE

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come.

WORDSWORTH: *Immortality.*

CHAPTER IX

THE CHANGELESS CHANGE

Our terror of death and our sorrow when it comes preserves us and our children: but it has become more intense than any other feeling, too intense for our happiness. It must be moderated by our reason and our enlarged intelligence.

It was essential to survival that we should fear death, just as it is essential to the safety of mustangs that they should start up at any sound that they do not know. But the time has come with us when that fear is no longer so necessary, just as our horses have learned indifference to many new noises. In the case of the animals this comes from being accustomed to rely on the protection of intelligence greater than their own, and from learning that their lives are not so frequently in danger.

In our case, death of the body seemed to us at first to be the end of life; but now the realization that the vanishing body is not our whole existence makes death less sad; nevertheless, as the horse retains the racial habit, and still trembles at whatever is strange, so we still mourn our dead as those without hope.

In order that the race may overcome this terror, it is necessary that strong souls should face the spectre and show to others that it is not fearful to them. By our fortitude others will not only be comforted, but will learn the relation of life to death.

We know life through its endless changes. The leaves cling long to the birch tree but if the branch ceases to shed its leaves and to produce new ones in their place, we know it is dead. In the winter time it seems to be dead because it is so still and unchangeable. We commonly speak of life as change—the sleep and waking, the gain of strength and the expenditure of it, the waste of the body and its renewal. Physicians tell us of the change of its substance every seven years or less in

which time it passes away and a new body takes its place.

The helpless pink and white baby we held in our arms and feared to put down lest its frail hold on life should relax,—is that in any sense the same body we clasp now in the grown man we still call our son? We can trace little relation between the two except through our love that has held him ever the same through the marvellous transformation. The progress from conscious life here to that larger life that we must enter through the gateway of death is no more marvellous than the change from babyhood to manhood.

These changes go on in those dear to us from day to day. We never lament them. Even though we are separated from the one we love so long that there is not left a particle of the body that we knew, we are not sad. "No" we say, "these things constitute only the animal life; that the body so dear to us passes away every few years is not terrible, because it is replaced by another body different, but no less dear; that these deaths in life should cease would

mean stagnation which would be death indeed."

But why is the body dear? Because it is, as it were, a part of ourselves and because it shows forth the mind and the heart that we love. That we mourn its passing away is pure selfishness; not wickedness, but natural selfishness that we cannot help. We would not unduly mourn our loss of it could we see that it is only the bodily life that is gone. But the life is more than the body.

Life is love and death. Death necessarily goes with life, as shadow necessarily goes with light, and each insensibly slips into the other. The life of the seed takes up the "dead" minerals—silex, iron and so on, and they give body and color to the grain. We eat the grain and it goes to make up our bones; dead mineral has taken on life: afterwards we die and our bodies are dissolved and the same minerals pass into the new seeds. Nothing really dies and no one can say at what time that which we think of as dead becomes alive and takes on immortality.

Terror of death is not Christian. True Christianity teaches us that death is a return to the Father, but we have perverted it. We assert the Universal Fatherhood in one breath and deny it in the next. We picture death, the passing from our present conscious life, as the portal of happiness, and then blot that out by representing it as the door to outer darkness and suffering. The mind of man seized upon the cruel suggestion of everlasting punishment and in spite of himself, death became to him nothing but the gateway to torture. He hoped to evade this torture by tears, prayers, sacrifices, but always the fear that he might not escape, added mystery and terror to a change that should be natural. The hymns plainly show this feeling:

> Upon a narrow neck of land
> Twixt two unbounded seas I stand
> Yet how insensible
> A point of time, a moment's space
> Removes me to that heavenly place
> Or shuts me up in Hell.

The sensitive mind revolts and those

who have more courage than credence refuse to accept such doctrine.

Many writers and poets whom we think of as non-religious have a deep sense of the naturalness of death. Says Dickens:

> The golden ripple on the wall came back again, and nothing else stirred in the room. The old, old fashion! That fashion that came in with our first garments, and will last unchanged until our race has run its course, and the wide firmament is rolled up like a scroll. The old, old fashion—Death! Oh, thank God, all who see it, for that older fashion yet of Immortality! And look upon us, angels of young children, with regard not quite estranged, when the swift river bears us to the ocean.
>
> CHARLES DICKENS: *Dombey and Son.*

TAKING UP LIFE AGAIN

Out of the quiet night they came,
  The songs that were brave and free,
To the listening ears of the elder seers.
  And is there none for me?

Up from the hidden deeps of pain
  Flowed the fancies sweet and true,
Whose reviving streams were the poets' dreams,
  And is there none for you?

Are the stellar spaces tenantless,
  And the whispering voices dumb?
Has the boundless sea of eternity
  Unto its limit come?

Or is it for sound of my restless heart,
  In its beating ceaselessly,
That I cannot hear the voices clear
  That fain would speak to me?

And is it for speed of your hasting steps,
  As you range the wide world through,
What the waters sweet that would reach your feet,
  Still call in vain to you?

William Adams Brown.

CHAPTER X

TAKING UP LIFE AGAIN

The star looks down upon our restless, feverish little world, the star that has looked upon the same struggles and griefs and silences for thousands and thousands of years and it seems to ask us "Why so sorrowful, little Man?" For in a moment the trouble will be over and the quiet will come again.

We might face the future with Stevenson's prayer on our lips:

> The day returns and brings us the petty round of irritating concerns and duties.
>
> Help us to play the man, help us to perform them with laughter and kind faces, let cheerfulness abound with industry. Give us to go blithely on our business all this day, bring us to our resting beds weary and content and undishonored, and grant us in the end, the gift of sleep.

Instead, we are sorrowful and spend our time feverishly seeking relief. Christianity offers for that sorrow divine sympathy and the belief that all will be right in the next world. Buddhism offers suppression of the desire for life, passivity. No matter which we choose we continue to be "troubled."

But many of our sorrows, or at least of our anxieties, come from having set our hearts upon some thing or some course of action, which in spite of experience, we think would bring us happiness.

We have hardly any control over circumstances: we have almost no knowledge of results. Yet we are frantic because we have not been able to shape events to suit ourselves, and also because we fear the consequences of things as they shape themselves.

We determine upon one way of living, or upon some set of circumstances that appears to us to be for our happiness, and then immediately become anxious and unhappy lest that should fail. There have been such failures before, some that

seemed to us utterly disastrous, that we supposed would quench the very light of our lives—yet somehow, it shone out again, and still shines, though we dim it with doubt and tears.

We have often seen the things we desired bring disaster, and the events that seemed so terrible turn out well in the end, but apparently we do not learn the lesson these experiences are meant to teach. We keep on worrying, planning and grieving.

It is quite possible for anyone to nurse a sorrow so that it lasts for ever. It need not necessarily be an overwhelming sorrow. Some people "never get over" the burning of their house or the loss of their business. In cases of death we often hug our woe with an unconscious eye upon the verdict of others that as we are so desolate, it is because we have such intense feeling we cannot forget past pain in present happiness.

If we have no personal complaint against fate or fortune, then of all the woes of the world we take to ourselves the particular woes of some "other," who is especially

dear to us, and rebel against them. Yet we know that were all pain relieved, development would stop. We know that for our suffering, we have strength; that even though our lives be over, death is not terrible, for we shall be "in the hands of God the same as before." But for those who are dear to us we cannot accept it.

In the Hebrew scriptures, the punishment attributed to divine wisdom and mercy when "My people would not hearken to my voice and Israel would have none of me," was this, "So I gave them up to their own heart's lust, and they have walked in their own councils." The result recorded of their walking in their own councils was not satisfactory to them nor would it be to us. Whatever the Nature of Things requires us to do, there will be strength and also time provided for it; we are never forced to make bricks without straw. As thy days so shall be thy strength.

When his disciples thought he must be faint with hunger, Jesus said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." So we

may have peace that the world knows not of, the quiet that comes from feeling that it is the Spirit that keeps the Universe, and that therefore it is impossible for anything to go really wrong: for the same love that lays the burden made the back.

To all these sorrows, also, there is an end.

> From too much love of living,
> From hope and fear set free;
> We thank with brief thanksgiving
> Whatever gods may be
> That no life lives forever,
> That dead men rise up never,
> That even the weariest river
> Winds somewhere safe to sea.
> SWINBURNE: *The Garden of Proserpine.*

A child wants dolls, it does not know why it wants a doll more than a toy; but adults know that the doll calls out the motherly instinct and the fatherly instinct too in the little one.

The wise educator gives the doll with that in his mind, and the child loves the doll and so develops its own tenderness. If the doll is broken, the child despairs and

weeps with tears as bitter as ours. When he lets it fall and it is broken he might think there was no use in having had it, since it is smashed and gone.

Not being able to see the full relation of himself as the cause, to the broken doll as the effect, he may even vaguely wonder why the thing he loved was given at all, if it was to be taken away. He would be still more likely to feel this if the accident happened through another's ignorance or neglect. But the tutor knows that it was needed. So it is with us also: to us it seems more cruel that we had our treasure only to lose it. We do not see that it had its mission to develop in us the tenderness that may bless the world.

The progress of our lives goes on from clear view to clearer, from understanding to higher understanding. Birth, youth, maturity, age, bring new wisdom in their turn; we cannot seriously contend that death changes all this and makes useless all that has gone before.

"THE WILL OF GOD"

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Naught we know dies. Shall that alone which knows
Be as a sword consumed before the sheath
By sightless lightning?

SHELLEY: *Adonais.*

CHAPTER XI

"THE WILL OF GOD"

THEY used to tell you that this was the will of God, as an arbitrary decision, that "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away" and that there was nothing to do but to believe this and to "submit."

All your soul cries out that it is not true, that this is not the will of God. You say that you would not treat God so, and a loving God and all wise and all powerful would not treat you so—*and you are right.* If it were possible he would have made an easier law.

You remember the old epitaph once considered profane:

> Here lie I, David Elginbrod,
> Be merciful to me, O God,
> As I would be if I were Thee
> And Thou David Elginbrod.

You say, "If there is a God that treats men so, he may revenge himself upon me cruelly as such a God would do, but he cannot make me love or worship him. He cannot be loved."

Let us not be afraid to face the truth: we shall not be less religious for refusing to believe what our reason agrees with our feeling in rejecting. If the prophets and teachers had been afraid we should still be worshipping stocks and stones.

Says Dr. C. C. Hall, President of the Union Theological Seminary, "If God is practically responsible for nine-tenths of the evil and sorrow that comes on us what impulse have we to desire his consolations?"

We torture our hearts to make them say this fearful paradox, "God's will has done this, therefore I turn to God to comfort me." Says the Rev. Chauncey Giles in *Consolation*, "God permits pain and sorrow to come upon us because he cannot prevent it, but he never caused it."

No one in his heart really believes that God sends evil, otherwise as they thank

him for "good gifts" they would revile him for bad. Let us see if we can think out together a reasonable explanation of why this horror has come upon us.

The bottom fact of life is, that we are all "of one flesh." Every religion teaches this, every science repeats that we are all brothers, that no one liveth to himself alone or so much as dieth for himself. We are absolutely and inextricably bound up one with another in thought, feeling and action: everyone influences us and we influence everyone, each in our degree. One person may know a great deal more than the rest but he cannot cut himself off from the others on that account, for they still influence and to an extent control his life, with or without his consent. For instance, one may know much better ways of dressing than the usual costume, but it is wiser for most persons at least to conform to the senseless custom of the rest, rather than to cut themselves off from society and influence by wearing "a sensible dress." The best we can do now is to wear the most sensible dress that society

tolerates. Even when people become more sensible, we shall only be able to keep a little further in advance of them. We must usually conform in non-essentials if we wish to rebel in essentials and still not be separated from our kind.

We profit by every good thought and work and invention that anyone produces, and we suffer more or less from every bad bit of work or crime that happens anywhere. The burglar we never saw makes us guard our houses, the immigrant we never knew brings us the grippe. We don't even know now who showed us how to make a fire-proof safe or to set a bone, but we lose or profit by every one of them just the same. Every one and every thing is more or less dependent on all persons and things. That is the nature of the world.

Maybe things might have been different, but if we were able to live a solitary, uninfluential life we certainly would not be happier nor would the race advance. Emerson says "God goes to school in men," that is, God provided for himself the

needed experience. There is nothing to prove that God, or whatever we may call the Power or Force that brought us up from the earth, could have brought forth wisdom and experience in any better way. If a power is good it must have done the best it could. This Power could not have made man any more perfect than it did. As the child has to grow to knowledge and strength, so the race had to grow and develop. We have no ground for believing that any Force could have made man a perfect being without need of long and slow growth through experience. We have only the unsupported say-so of some old religious books for the idea that an all-powerful God made man weaker and less good than he was able to make him. We cannot even imagine an all-powerful Being. Why should we be expected to believe in one without any evidence?

They say to you "Have faith." They might as well say to those suffering in poverty "Have money." We have reason and must satisfy the reason before we can have a reasonable faith.

Geology confirms our inference from what we know of savages that our ancestors were creatures very like monkeys; new conditions were forced upon them to which they gradually adapted themselves. This being true we have no reason to believe that any Power could forthwith produce perfect and enduring bodies suited to those conditions. We rise by slow degrees and no one can break away, leaving all the rest behind.

You and I for ourselves cannot help those conditions. No; over and over again; we are entirely knit together with all creation: no one can realize for himself a perfect world in the midst of imperfection, unnatural struggle, vice, and crime. If there were an all-powerful principle that *could* at once make men perfectly strong, tender, intelligent and sympathetic without struggle or pain or death, then it is clear that it is unkind in such a Being to allow a single groan.

There is nothing that goes to show there could be any other way of growth. The best that we can conceive of is that we

should develop and grow toward perfection. We could not have conceived of perfection unless we had known imperfection for contrast. We could not grow had we been made perfect, and without growth there could be no life. Life being universal we must taste of it as it is for all. We must suffer for the ignorance and shortcomings of all, and we do not believe that any God could make it otherwise, or maybe a God would not be really kind in doing it, if he could so order it.

Suppose that men were "created," ready made, entirely suited to their surroundings, deathless, as the Bible story describes Adam in Eden before "the fall" then as population increased (for if they were to have children at all it must increase) it would inevitably overfill the universe, and new conditions of struggle for survival would begin. Even if men were made to adapt themselves to such a state by limiting births, then existence without the necessity of helpfulness, without the possibility of exercising sympathy,

without any necessity for improvement, sheep like, without any struggle, would be dull and purposeless.

Suppose that there be no plan in the universe, no guiding Life in it; even then the present ways of birth and growth and death are the result of Nature's experiments and trials, successes and failures, the siftings of centuries for millions upon millions of years, perhaps for thousands of millions of years. Do you think Nature ought to change them in your case alone?

For what do you think you are here? To have everything just the way you want it to be? It may be you came here for something sweeter and better than that.

FUNERAL RITES

I cannot make Crito believe that I am the Socrates who has been talking and conducting the argument. He fancies that I am the other Socrates whom he will soon see a dead body,—and he asks how he shall bury me. . . . False words are not only evil in themselves, but they infect the soul with evil. Be of good cheer, then, dear Crito, and say that you are burying my body only, and do with that whatever is usual and what you think best.

PLATO: *Phaedo.*

CHAPTER XII

FUNERAL RITES

One of the ways we have of adding to our own pain lies in our funeral customs. We are but little less heathen than our ancestors in this direction. True, we no longer hire mummers to swathe themselves in black and simulate the grief they cannot feel, but in a degree we ourselves take their places. We indicate our own grief and the grief of others by the depth of the mourning. Black is depressing to most persons, even in joy, and, in sorrow it adds to the weight of woe under which we sink.

We exclude the sun and dim the light of day in our homes. The life that has ceased here may have been so bright and joyous that only sunshine and dancing streams could typify it. Or, the cessation of another life may have been a welcome relief from pain and suffering, which, hav-

ing wrought its perfect work, had entitled the sufferer to the larger life outside this body. Unselfish love would cause our pain to be swallowed up in rejoicing that the loved one suffered no more for our sins of the body. We should bless the light, welcome the healing air and the happy song of birds, as expressing the joy of the freed spirit. But we will have none of nature's medicaments; we cherish our grief, like "Rachel mourning for her children and refusing to be comforted."

It is true we do not sit in the gateways of the city clad in sackcloth and casting ashes on our heads. Sackcloth is uncomfortable, and ashes on the head are dirty; moreover, modern civilization does not allow gateways to be occupied by mourners. The age of organized industrialism takes little account of the individual. But, figuratively speaking, we continue to wear sackcloth and ashes both at home and in public, thus not only checking any gladness in ourselves, but chilling it in others.

While most European countries as well

as American countries regard black as an emblem of mourning, many nations do not. The old Romans and the Spartans like the Chinese wore white, supposed to be emblematic of their friends being in Paradise, clad in shining robes. The Egyptians wore yellow, typifying the fall and decay of the leaf, while the Ethiopians expressed their idea of the return of the body to its native earth by wearing brown. Violet is worn by the Turks and is supposed to express hope on the one hand and sorrow on the other, the reference being to the short-lived spring flower whose color they have chosen. Perhaps our use of purple as mourning has the same meaning. The French kings also used violet for mourning, and former sovereigns of England adopted the same color.

At the time of the Spanish conquest the natives of Peru wore mouse-colored garments in mourning, and the Pacific Islanders still use gray. We have not progressed very far from the stage where we need to remind ourselves through symbols. The gods of our hands are those we continue

to worship. But as we grow more civilized we become more cosmopolitan and adopt more of the customs of our sister nations. So you can wear almost any color as mourning to express your own feelings without spreading a pall over others or reminding them of their own losses or making a show of your grief by wearing black.

Funeral rites date back so far that it is next to impossible to trace their origin. Very few nations have been so low in the scale as the Bactrians, who are said to have left their dead to be devoured by the dogs. The treatment of the dead is generally regarded as a sign of the stage of development a nation has attained.

Three classes of burials have existed for many centuries:

Simple closing up of the body in earth or stone;

Burning the body and entombing the ashes;

Embalming the body.

The first method was early Jewish, and in modified form is still the prevailing custom; cremation is being revived ex-

tensively, and embalming, as we know it to-day, is being more and more practiced. The Egyptians carried embalming to its greatest perfection, the soil and climate of the country affording unequalled facilities. Although the bodies when embalmed were frequently placed in sepulchres and tombs, such as the pyramids erected for the powerful, yet many preferred to keep their dead with them. They stood erect in wooden chests, and visitors to the family were expected to treat them with marked respect.

Funeral orations were not delivered over Egyptians, no matter what their rank, unless they were adjudged to be worthy. The body was always carried in a boat across one of the numerous lakelets in that country, where, on the further bank, sat judges appointed for the occasion. If anyone had aught against the deceased he might there present accusation and proofs. If in the opinion of the judges the charges were sustained no honors could be paid the dead and he was condemned to perpetual infamy. If not sustained, the accuser was

severely punished, the people shouted in gladness that the reputation of the deceased had not been harmed, and he was interred with great honor.

The old Hebrews made this speech to their dead before interring the body: "Blessed be God who has formed thee, maintained thee, and taken away thy life. O dead, He knows thy number and shall one day restore thy life." Then a funeral oration was delivered, a prayer called "the righteousness of judgment" was offered, and finally, turning the cold face towards heaven, they cried out "Go in peace."

The modern Jews call their burying ground Beth Hachaim, or "House of the Living," the dead being looked upon as living because of their new found immortality. The very name of the burial place gives hope. The modern Jew does not rend his clothes as did the ancient Hebrew. He contents himself with cutting off a piece of his garments.

Assyrians and ancient Armenians had similar burial customs. None of these

burned their dead, though some offered sacrifices of living bodies. They buried the dead because of a tradition among them that the first man was buried. The Babylonians, who believed in future rewards and punishments, also buried their dead by laying the bodies in the earth.

The ancient Greeks paid high honors to the dead, holding them sacred and inviolable, and bade farewell to the bodies of their great men with expressions of joy for their reception into heaven.

Incremation was in general use among ancient Greeks and Romans and was considered a very sacred rite exceeding in magnificence and expense all other kinds of funerals. Bodies of the great or wealthy were burned with jewels, rich odors, gold, fine apparel, herds of cattle, flocks of sheep, and sometimes concubines and slaves. The funeral fires were usually extinguished with red wine, the bones and ashes gathered up in an urn and placed in a costly monument. Incremation gradually ceased at Rome under the emperors, and became extinct in Europe, although it was pro-

posed to revive the practice during the French Revolution.

Roman widowers used to visit the graves of their wives to strew them with roses, violets, hyacinths, lilies and purple flowers. Widows also showed their grief and affection in this way, and frequently planted flowers there. It is probably from this that we derive our custom of flowers for the dead, just as we derive the custom of planting trees and shrubs and otherwise beautifying our cemeteries from the Turks.

It has been suggested by a modern writer, that, if a part of the money spent in funeral wreaths were spent to send flowers later to the living members of the bereaved family, it might serve a more comforting, helpful purpose. Although to some the lavish gift is an expression of real feeling, which is always comforting.

In Italy bands are a part of funeral processions. At the funerals of children only lively music is played, to express rejoicing that the Spirit has been early freed from the earthly body so subject to pain and disappointments.

Funeral rites and ceremonies probably arose through the humanizing sentiment of grief and the sympathy it called out. Some one has pointed out that it is not wrong to mourn, nor a crime to weep. There was one who was recorded as "a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief" though not given to mourning. Nowhere do we read of his grief blinding his eyes to the needs of others, but rather that he went about doing good, thus easing the weight of woe.

So with us; grief is good for us if it leads us to see where we can lighten another's burden. If it fail to show us this, the fault lies not in the true efficacy of sorrow as a teacher, but in our own attitude as scholars. Nothing that would heighten our own sense of loss or injury should claim our attention. Funeral rites and customs should show forth our love and respect for the dead, but need not be of a nature to depress and harrow ourselves and those about us. We will not continue such practices when we have learned to look upon death as a natural change.

The mother weeps when she sends the child from the shelter of home to the school, and again when he goes from the day school near at hand to the higher school elsewhere. But her grief is tempered by the knowledge that his acquirements and development demand this change and he is no less hers because she cannot see and hear him every day. Death is but the graduation from this school of life to the larger school, a new "Commencement Day." Why not have the joyous side of this change accentuated? Let us bear our loved one like the "Grammarian" of old, drums beating, flags flying, to the lofty peak of unselfish devotion, and there leave him.

Loftily lying,
Still loftier than the world suspects,
Living and dying.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAD

Thank Heaven! the crisis,
The danger, is past,
And the lingering illness
Is over at last,
And the fever called "Living"
Is conquered at last.

Sadly I know
I am shorn of my strength,
And no muscle I move,
As I lie at full length:
But no matter!—I feel
I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly
Now, in my bed,
That any beholder
Might fancy me dead,
Might start at beholding me,
Thinking me dead.

EDGAR ALLAN POE: *From Annie.*

CHAPTER XIII

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAD

We sometimes say "Oh, if only the dead could send one message to say that they are happy! Why does not Providence permit that?"

It is not clear that such a permission would always be kind. The Buddhists, about one-tenth of the whole inhabitants of the earth, believe that the soul goes into quiet for thousands of years before it revisits the earth in some other body, when it profits by the lessons of this life and receives the lessons of that next one. Those believers need no message, and no message would be a comfort to them. The largest section, the Catholics, sixteen persons in each hundred—believe that the soul goes on to ages of expiatory torment, —a message would be little comfort to them.

Some Protestants profess the belief that the souls of certain persons go to terrible torments. Happily hardly anyone believes that of one whom they love or even know. Certainly, you don't believe it of your dead. Yet you think it would be soothing to you to have the assurance of what you already know, that *your* beloved is happy, or at least at peace.

But in so asking, you are asking that an exception be made in favor of you: that those to whom it would be comforting should get a message, while all others are left in blissful ignorance. This also assumes that we should understand the state of the dead when we heard of it, and that it would not simply arouse more unsatisfiable curiosity.

No: it is to be feared that even Supernal Wisdom could not give us a reply that would still our troubled hearts. Maybe "Let not your heart be troubled," is the kindest of all messages from the dead.

There is still another growing belief that immortality consists in the thought and feeling which go out from us and be-

come a part of the life of the world; that in the children of our minds and of our hearts, no less than of our bodies, we live again; that immortality is for that which is more than matter—the best and noblest we had to give to the world.

O, may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence; live
In pulses stirred to generosity
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues. . . . .
This is life to come
Which martyr'd men have made more glorious
For us who strive to follow.
May I reach
That purest heaven, be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony,
Enkindle generous ardor, feed pure love,
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty,
Be the sweet presence of a good diffus'd
And in diffusion ever more intense!
So shall I join the choir invisible
Whose music is the gladness of the world.

GEORGE ELIOT: *Choir Invisible.*

Such eternal life is an inspiration to many noble souls. If those poor hearts that ask a message were to hear a voice from the clouds saying that such is immortality, would that, which comforts others, comfort them?

It may be that we are asking for a picture of infinity—an explanation of quaternions when we do not understand addition and subtraction.

This would be a sufficient reason why those who believe in spirit manifestation seem to get such vague and illusory answers to questions addressed to the spirits of the departed. Spirits could hardly say, as thoughtless parents say to the questioning child, "You will know when you are older," but they are often reported as saying that we could not understand the circumstances in which they find themselves. We say such knowledge might have been given to us if the universe were kind. But no knowledge is "given to us," we have to acquire it. We Occidentals, who could have learned but have not, to

understand the character or the thought of the Orient, when so much depends on that understanding, can hardly complain that we have not yet learned to understand the dead.

Spiritualists, or as some of them prefer to be called, Spiritists, tell us that they have communication with the dead, and that those who have not, are not as yet sufficiently spiritual to be able to get in touch with spirits. We can only say that, so far, the evidence of it seems inconclusive. Much of what we hear and see of Spiritism is delusion, often perhaps unintentional fraud; much more may be deliberately fraudulent; but there is certainly an unexplained residuum which has convinced many keen and critical minds.

Anyone who reads I. Heysinger's *Spirit and Matter at the Bar of Modern Science*, or Sir Oliver Lodge's rather heavy *Human Personality*, will probably feel that there is something which cannot be explained by any material knowledge we now possess. Practically all races have looked and still look for some communications from de-

parted spirits. As Professor Shaler says in *The Individual*, "In all such popular opinions, however much of error there may be, there remains the verdict of the great jury, which is apt, in some measure, to hold essential truth."

But the fact remains that no revelation, no great thought, no poem, not even a notable invention or discovery, is proved to have come to us through spirit manifestations. Some things that have been communicated seem to Spiritists to be highly significant; but they do not seem so to the mass of mankind, although mankind is pretty well agreed on a vast number of other things as highly significant.

As soon as that time arrives, when we shall have solved the problems necessary to make this earth a heaven instead of a hell, when "No one shall work for money, and no one shall work for fame;" when from the necessary uncertainties of spirit communication and mediumship all the conscious and unconscious fraud shall be eliminated then we may reasonably hope for certain assurances as to those who have

gone before. Until that time we can find more than enough to occupy us in learning about this world and obedience to its laws. Until that time we shall find that for that state as for this "Love is enough."

EARTHLY IMMORTALITY

The last words of a little boy while in great pain, were these: "I know it's all Love."

CHAPTER XIV

EARTHLY IMMORTALITY

Suppose that some fountain of eternal youth had given us immortality, or that, following the old story, man had eaten of the tree of life, and lived forever. Then, even his natural increase would soon have filled not only this world, but all habitable worlds. Countless millions of undeveloped men crowded together would have forced upon us problems for which we had not the moral development needed to solve them. We should have been prematurely confronted with the difficulties of modern competition for mere survival.

The overcrowded condition of this planet would shortly make it necessary somehow to get off the earth. To have made such immortality even a seeming benefit, man must also have been made immune from

incurable accident or illness; else were immortality a curse.

Then, no matter how badly any men lived, all would survive forever, transmitting their faults and follies to their children indefinitely, thus making the race inheritance worse instead of better. Whether mankind sprang from anthropoid ancestors, as science now teaches, or not, we certainly sprang from lower savage ancestors. Even now we are perplexed to know what to do with "reversionary types" —savage men born into civilized society. We call them "degenerates." Those ancestors had not the brain power or even the brain space to adapt themselves to the closer relation and higher morality of modern life—I fear that if all our ancestors had survived, modern society would have to keep most of them in jail. Alaric the Goth and Genseric the Hun, from whom we derive so much of our strength and courage, would be seen only through the bars.

Though death were abolished there might be pain, to be sure, without death,

but it would have to be curable pain and not too intense, else it would defeat itself by deadening sensibility. Then men would argue thus, "I will do this wrong, injure my body by gratifying all my appetites, even at the expense of my fellows, because the worst that can come to me is a period of suffering."

If transgression entailed no painful consequences, then the motive for avoiding transgression would cease, and progress would be checked. We grow by tracing the relation of effects to causes. If there were no "evil" effects how should we find out "evil" causes?

Man's capacity for acquiring knowledge, and for improvement in body, mind and affections is in itself a proof of imperfection in the human being as he comes into the world. The child arrives in that helplessness which is at once the dearest joy and the highest education of its parents; under wise guidance it acquires physical strength; it grows in stature and understanding; to enlighten its delightful, fascinating ignorance is the highest function of those who

brought it forth. To train its affections enlarges ours; because it is helpless physically, intellectually and morally, it needs our help.

If it grows to strength and wisdom and tenderness it must at first be imperfect in body, in thought and in morals. Otherwise, it would need no growth; there would be no need of education or of progress. That is a state of which man cannot really conceive. Growth toward an end or ideal is the only way by which man can be conscious of life.

"Great rewards and fearful punishments" said a noted surgeon, "are necessary to make men do their best."

The desire for power is one of the motives that led us up from the life of the brute and still leads us on to further development. It is natural to men to try to maintain by every means the position of advantage that their efforts have obtained.

It is natural to believe that the order which we have made,—"the established order," is the best, and fiercely to resist, as sacrilege and treason, any attempt to

change it. We are slow to question the wisdom of our ancestors, to alter ancient constitutions, to doubt authority; how much less should we revolt were those who instituted and invented those customs and theories still with us? If in addition to the antiquity of the customs or beliefs, we had to contend against the accumulated experience and personal influence of those who devised them, would there be any hope of our emancipation?

We are apt to think that the fact of the existence of any state of society is sufficient reason for continuing it. If the personal power and cunning of our ancestors were still existent among us, we would submit to their ways and bow to their authority.

It is true that if we had had eternal life on earth, some men would have grown in intelligence and benevolence without harder teaching than curable pain, but experience teaches us that many men would not. At present a man impresses upon his age, and often upon subsequent ages the good or evil he conceives; he dies and posterity chooses that which it thinks wise

and good and rejects that which it thinks foolish and evil. If he never died nor decayed, but, on the contrary, became greater and greater, the power and influence of our transcendent geniuses, whether for good or ill, would perpetuate itself far more than now. Think what a fortune Jacob would have accumulated, what authority Aristotle would have been accorded, what power Alexander or Napoleon would have attained!

Physical immortality would be to perpetuate the past and petrify the present. Where then would man differ from the beasts? For all progress has been made by analyzing what has been and comparing it with what might be; retaining the best of the past, all that, being true, has stood the test of experience, and rejecting what has failed. Even if we could start such an immortal race from the vantage point humanity has now gained, would we choose to develop no further? Would we welcome the prospect of living unchanged forever, even though we had achieved the highest ideal of perfection we can now conceive?

No; physical immortality is not even an iridescent dream. Then why or on what principle should we require that those whom we love should be exempt from benign and necessary death?

THE NECESSITY OF CHANGE

So deeply inherent is it in this life of ours that men have to suffer for each other's sins, so inevitably diffusive is human suffering, that even justice makes its victims and we can conceive no retribution that does not spread beyond its mark in pulsations of unmerited pain."

GEORGE ELIOT: *The Mill on the Floss.*

CHAPTER XV

THE NECESSITY OF CHANGE

Immortality on this earth would bring other troubles. Even if there were a restraint in nature on over-population, as perhaps there is now, outside of war, pestilence, and famine, it would have been impossible, were there no deaths, for more than one in hundreds of thousands of millions of those who have lived and enjoyed life to have come into life at all.

There is no likelihood that either you or I would have known consciousness, nor any of those whom we have loved. Hardly any whom we have regarded as the greatest benefactors of the race in ages gone, would have been "manifest in the flesh." In that case the race as a whole would have been less advanced than it is now.

Suppose only four children had been born to Adam and Eve instead of the

seven they had, and that four were born to each couple thereafter; certainly a moderate-sized family for times when land was free and all could earn their own living. Have you ever considered what that relatively moderate increase would mean?

Take thirty generations, covering, say, eight hundred to nine hundred years, and in that short time the population would have been more than three times the present population of the whole world, or 4,294,967,292. In fifty generations the world would not be big enough to hold them all. There would then be 4,503,827,370,496 inhabitants in the world, or more than three million times as many as are now in it. If each couple produced only two children that would only postpone the difficulty for this calculation is only of the increase, not of those who have been born.

If at the end of two thousand years there had been no more children born, then our youngest people to-day would be thousands of years old.

It seems fantastic when worked out like this, yet if all the mourning hearts of all the races and ages since time began had had their wish that death had not come near to them, what else could have resulted? It makes it clear to us that if any power could abolish death it must also abolish birth. So if there is any material sense in which "the last enemy death" shall be overcome, the first enemy birth will die with it.

If we, being such an immortal race, could see a world where there was birth and death, with the constant change and development accompanying these two conditions, would we not reproach whatever gods there were for not sending death so that birth might be possible, just as we now murmur at permitted death?

One might desire special favor for himself for a limited time, as that he or his relations should be exempt from death until what he considered the proper period for them to die; but to ask that there be no death and that our children be spared to us, is folly, for there could not be any

children. Our petition would defeat itself.

Just try to imagine a world without children. Besides the loss of the prattle and laughter of children, the clinging helplessness that wakens in us the virtues of sympathy, care, tenderness, man would be deprived of the opportunity to see not only his own life, but the life of the race, re-lived in the growing child, and to learn as he does now his greatest lessons therefrom. Whether we know it or not, we learn more from the child than the child learns from us. Says Michelet: "No consecrated absurdity would have stood its ground if the man had not silenced the objections of the child."

But even to ask that untimely death be abolished is unreasonable, for whether we choose to call them "accidental" or "untimely" deaths or not, all deaths except those from extreme old age, are due to ignorance or neglect of natural laws, or both. That may not be clear to you at once, but a very little consideration will prove that you always knew it, though

perhaps not conscious of your knowledge.

Take such an extreme case as the worried business man who brings sorrow and suffering upon his relatives by committing suicide. You say "he was not in his right mind and should not be held responsible for his own 'untimely' end. His death was less due to the final act of violence than to the causes that led to his worry and depression."

True, but were not these causes themselves due to ignorance or neglect of the laws of the universe? Not only was he ignorant of the harmonious relation of the individual and the universal, but he and his fellowmen have built up a system of social and industrial life based upon such direct violations of natural laws, that the wonder is that more men are not driven to insanity and suicide. Ignorance may have been the original cause of such a system, but a selfish determination to profit at any cost helps to maintain it.

The consequences of the individual's act sometimes fall heavier upon the com-

munity than upon the individual, as for instance when the incendiary or the owner of a fire-trap building causes many deaths and incalculable sorrow and himself is punished by a few years' imprisonment. Conversely, the consequences of the community's act sometimes fall heaviest upon an individual. Every such suicide is an accusation against the system, and when the number of accusers is sufficiently increased the community begins to readjust its social and industrial system in accordance with natural laws.

The boy or girl killed by a speeding automobile is also a victim of similar ignorance or neglect, or of both combined. The unsafe condition of our streets is another manifestation of community ignorance or neglect.

Further, the fate of the tuberculous child may also be traced to violation of natural law, as may deaths by infectious diseases.

Midas lived in a palace, but his daughter caught a disease that grew up in one of the slums, out of which Midas "got his living."

The doctor said that it was scarlet fever; and when it looked like measles, he said "measles had intervened."

So he gave her medicines till the digestion got hopelessly out of order; then he told the nurse to rouse the patient three times a night to give her sleeping draughts. He was a very wise doctor and knew he must do something for his patient—and for his fee.

Later he "found" that Midas's daughter had developed pneumonia; and Midas believed it all, so the doctor administered stimulants and called another doctor in consultation, who said that he had done exactly right. Then they injected morphine into her arm, to quiet Midas and the patient; and they said that her death was due to heart failure. So it was.

The Board of Health disinfected Midas's house—the slums took care of themselves.

The clergyman said that the girl had "faded like a leaf" and that "it was the will of God."

So it was; for "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

This is true of even that death which seems least explicable and most tragic, that of the woman in child-birth. So often it means leaving behind helpless dependent children, and we say it is a mysterious thing that any Power should permit such

an untimely death. But if we could know all the circumstances we should find that the rule held good. Multiply the cases as we will, the fact remains that ignorance or neglect of natural laws causes all deaths save those due to extreme old age. And whether what we now call "extreme old age" is the possible limit of life for the individual, we do not know and cannot know until all men know and obey natural laws.

THE PERSISTENCE OF LIFE

I got this body in the Fleshing Shop
When it was small and pudgy-like and red;
No teeth it had nor could it stand erect—
A fuzzy down sparse upon its head;
At sight of it the neighbors stood and laughed,
And tickled it and jogged it up and down;
Then some one put it in a little cart,
And wheeled it gaily through the gaping town.

When it grew stronger and could walk and run,
I wet it in the pond above the mill,
Or took it to a building called a "school,"
And there I had to keep it very still.
And later, when its muscles stronger grew,
I made it sow and reap to get its grain,
And tanned it in the summer's fiercest suns,
And toughened it with the wind and cold and rain.

It served to keep me near my friend, the Earth,
It helped me well to get from place to place,
And then, perhaps, a tiny bit of me
Has sometimes worked out through its hands and face!
How long I've had it! Longer than it seems
Since first they wrapped it in a linen clout
And now 'tis shriveled, patched and breaking down—
I guess, forsooth, that I have worn it out!

And I? Oh, bless you! I am very young,
A soul ne'er ages—is not bent or gray,
And when the body breaks and crumbles down—
The Fleshing Shop is just across the way!

RICHARD WIGHTMAN.

CHAPTER XVI

THE PERSISTENCE OF LIFE

The almost universal faith in personal life of some sort beyond the grave is reinforced by religious teaching. The attitude of intelligent scepticism toward that belief is expressed among the "Objects" which the New York *Truth Seeker* prints in every issue. "As to the existence and immortality of the soul, it neither affirms nor denies it." But the grounds of religious belief are all well covered in many devotional books and therefore we do not take them in up this volume. We aim rather to show their reasonable basis.

All peoples, since recorded time, have had myths and traditions which show a belief in the continued life of the real "I" after the death of the body. Modern science contends that any feeling or belief which is common to all races originated in

some truth, and that investigation will probably reveal that truth. Whilst a common belief cannot be regarded in itself as conclusive proof that the thing believed is a fact, it forms a basis from which we can work toward complete proof.

The very commonness of the belief in continued life is a link in the chain of evidence that goes to show that all racial life is one, whether past, present or future. The ideas of how the continued life would be expressed have been as different as the ideals, conditions and civilization of the different races of men, but the underlying belief or conviction is always the same. If we insist that any of these conceptions must be taken literally, we find them illogical and impossible, because the expression of ideals is always hampered by imperfect speech, and by our limited knowledge. When the ancients believed that the sky was a sort of canopy stretched over this earth and securely fastened down to its edges, it was natural that they should devise a place above and beyond the sky where the soul would live after it had left

the physical body. With our better knowledge of the formation of the universe, we cannot accept such an idea of future life; but we cannot dismiss the idea of life beyond this one experience, merely because we do not agree with past beliefs. We cannot accept annihilation—nothingness; we cannot even imagine it; neither can we rid ourselves of an underlying conviction that life holds more than we see here. It is our belief, and not our material life, which makes mankind one, which makes us *mankind*, not a mere succession of men, from the days of our earliest ancestors to the present time. Each individual is a passing expression of that same life—life itself being always one.

What do we believe of our ancestors? Have they not gained immortality, although their bodies have long since returned to that earth from which all life sprang? We are the inheritors of their life; we preserve and carry on what they in their time discovered and proved. Their life moulded us, because they gave to us increased power of thought, broader

ideals, and these in turn will expand more and more through those who come after us.

It is only the body, the material individuality, which is dissolved by death; our personality, that by which we know one another, remains and is added to the race progress. There was more in the old Hebrew expression that the dead were gathered to their fathers, than appears on the surface. When we have finished this earthly life we are gathered to our fathers, that is, all that we have done, all that we have thought, all that we have learned through our experience here, all that was really ourselves, is added to the sum of what our fathers knew and were, to fill that storehouse from which coming generations shall draw ever more and more of life.

If we believe in the law of cause and effect we must believe in some kind of continued life. If the action of this law could be suspended in any one particular or in any one direction it would not be a law at all. For in dealing with fundamental things exceptions do not prove the rule;

rather, a better statement of the rule, proves there are no exceptions.

Men find it difficult to see that our immortality is as real as our present identity. They do not recognize the immortality of men of even a generation ago, or ten generations ago, because they do not see that the personality of men is their form of life, of thought, and of sentiment. That is what endures; yet we think of it as unreal. We might understand it better if we thought of the body as our identity, that through which we make ourselves manifest to our fellows; and our thoughts, and sentiments, our real life, as our entity,—as the thing manifested.

Although each of us is as different and distinct from every one else in our personality, as we are in our bodies, yet we are not separate as our bodies are. The instruments through which life works may be separate, but life itself is one and the same. That is why we cannot get away from the sufferings and joys of others; why the consequence of our thoughts and acts fall upon others as upon ourselves,

not only on those now living but upon those also who are to follow. This oneness of life stretches back to the beginning which no man has seen, as it stretches on to that end which no man can conceive. Dr. Paul Carus compares humanity to the coral growth. Those tiny creatures, beginning life in sunny shallow waters, building ever higher, layer upon layer, as their work sank deeper and deeper because of the changes in the earth, are like the ancestors of man. They built the foundation for the coral life of to-day; though dead and gone centuries ago, it is upon them and upon their work that the living coral rises. Their work determines the very form of the work that is done now.

So it is with man. There is no individual in the sense of absolute separateness. Every individual is an expression of a bit of the soul-life of the race, and is made as it is by its close connection with all that has been, all that is and is to come. The body is continually passing away, but the personality is permanent; the form of life is maintained from generation to gen-

eration. Each individual thus partakes of the nature of time, he is both transient and immortal, for time is ever passing, yet always present.

The fleeting nature of time is a solace to all who suffer, who are weary and heavy-laden. The mere act passes away with the moment, so does all the suffering, all anxiety, all work and tribulation; but the result of the act, that which we learn from the suffering and sorrow, these remain; and they become a part of the sum of our own experience, which is our contribution to the life of the race.

SCIENCE AND IMMORTALITY

HE WHO DIED AT AZAN

(From the Arabic)

He who died at Azan sends
Hope to comfort all his friends.

Faithful friends! It lies, I know
Pale and white and cold as snow;
And ye say, "Abdullah's dead!"
Weeping at the feet and head.
I can see your falling tears,
I can hear your sighs and prayers;
Yet I smile and whisper this—
"I am not the thing you kiss;
Cease your tears and let it lie;
It was mine, it is not I."

Sweet friends! what the women lave
For the last sleep of the grave,
Is a hut which I am quitting,
Is a garment no more fitting,
Is a cage from which, at last,
Like a bird my soul hath passed.
Love the inmate, not the room—
The wearer, not the garb,—the plume
Of the eagle, not the bars
That kept him from those splendid stars.

Loving friends! Be wise and dry
Straightway every weeping eye—
What ye lift upon the bier
Is not worth a single tear.
'Tis an empty sea-shell—one
Out of which the pearl is gone;

The shell is broken, it lies there;
The pearl, the all, the soul, is here.
'Tis an earthen jar, whose lid
Allah sealed, the while it hid
That treasure of his treasury,
A mind that loved him; let it lie!
Let the shard be earth's once more,
Since the gold is in His store!

Allah glorious! Allah good!
Now thy world is understood;
Now the long, long wonder ends;
Yet ye weep, my foolish friends,
While the man whom ye called dead,
In unspoken bliss, instead
Lives and loves you: lost, 'tis true,
For the light that shines for you;
But in the light ye cannot see
Of undisturbed felicity—
In a perfect paradise
And a life that never dies.

Farewell friends; But not farewell.
Where I am, ye, too, shall dwell.
I am gone before your face,
A moment's worth, a little space.
When ye come where I have stepped
Ye will wonder why ye wept;
Ye will know, by true love taught,
That here is all, and there is naught.
Weep awhile, if ye are fain—
Sunshine still must follow rain;
Only not at death—for death,
Now we know, is that first breath
Which our souls draw when we enter
Life, which is of all life center.

Be ye certain all seems love,
Viewed from Allah's throne above;
Be ye stout of heart, and come
Bravely onward to your home!
La-il Allah! Allah la!
O love divine! O love alway!

He who died at Azan gave
This to those who made his grave.

Sir Edwin Arnold.

CHAPTER XVII

SCIENCE AND IMMORTALITY

HARDLY any belief is earlier or more general than the conviction of some kind of life after death. There must be some basis for it. As even the flimsiest building must have some foundation, the materialist has been reduced to attribute this belief to the universal desire for immortality.

It might be answered that the desire is not universal; but it is enough to say that general desire does not bring general belief in its realization. Most persons, in their prime at least, desire earthly immortality, yet hardly one has ever believed in it and such belief as there was in fountains of youth has been long ago outgrown. Practically, everyone desires great wealth, but hardly anyone believes he will get it, and no one believes that everyone will.

That the savage believed in a future life

because he mistook the thunder for the voice of some great Being and the lightning for his glittering spear may be true. He may have concluded that shadows were ghosts and diseases the work of spirits. If so, that only proves that his reasoning was faulty; it is no argument against his conclusion that spirits exist. At any rate, his belief in a future is reasonable in itself.

We believe in life; that we can see. Science has showed us life in every form of matter; that we know; we have found no instance in nature where matter has changed into an inert and dead thing.

Is it scientific then to assert that our life does not continue in any form, that the highest activity alone becomes "dead" and ceases with the dissolution of our flesh?

All change as far as we can see, is evolution of the one force of life. Prof. A. H. Lloyd of the University of Michigan says "The term divisibility is to be taken seriously. Nothing lives to itself alone, but all things 'animate' and 'inanimate'

are the vital incidents of the whole." When any state exists, as personal life exists, or as Milan Cathedral exists, we may safely presume that it continues to exist until something destroys it. The shrine may be covered up by night fall or changed in appearance by a snow storm, but in the absence of proof that it has been destroyed we reasonably continue to believe that it is still there. We will not believe that it has vanished without conclusive proof.

But, it may be urged, we have always found consciousness connected with a nervous system and know it only as expressed through such a system. True; but we have no senses that would enable us to detect consciousness anywhere it might appear unconnected with some physical body. We have no organs that can perceive magnetism either; probably we would gain nothing if we had; we infer it and we believe in it because we see effects we can explain only by that belief. Many persons who call themselves psychics believe that they do sense disem-

bodied existences. Perhaps they do: it is unphilosophical for us to say they do not merely because we do not. To disbelieve in the existence of anything because we have had no experience of it is to take for granted that we have explored all the universe. It would lead the backwoods man to disbelieve in wireless telegraphy; but if he does disbelieve, it is because he does not know and can not know anything about electricity.

Nature seems to make a strong effort to preserve personality and identity: the children "inherit" as we say the traits and peculiarities of their ancestors, both mental and physical. Every family portrait gallery of many generations shows a recurrence, often at long intervals, of family characteristics, sometimes so trifling as to suggest that they are preserved only to continue the personality.

That is not the mere continuance of the human race: seems rather as if in our offspring part of us survived both our death and their birth. If then the body and the mind retain through earthly generations

their individuality, is it not likely that the same will be true in any future state?

The likeness of sleep to a temporary death is a time-worn fancy, yet it is perhaps more real than we think. Science long puzzled over the apparent break in consciousness during sleep, because such a break seems to be inconsistent with the continuity and oneness of nature; but it is now generally believed that some sort of mental activity continues, though we do not remember it when we awake, just as some bodily activity continues during the deepest sleep. In any case neither sleep nor death can change that which loved into a thing that hates. Our love is our life here and our immortality hereafter, even were there no other.

To the eye deciduous trees die every winter; in fact they do so nearly die that we perceive that a branch is dead only because it fails to bud again in Spring. But the plant that does not die, though it changes in its season from the soft green shoot to a minature tree, is exactly the

same plant that seemed to die with the coming of frost. And the one that "dies," as we say, does not become the inert mass that it appears: in it too, a change of form, a vast activity, takes place, an activity which fits it to return as vegetable mold into the life of other plants or of animals. So it may well be with death: we see change which we call disintegration, in the body that is left—it is really re-arrangement.

We know that no particle that goes to make up the body is destroyed. It merely goes into some other forms, some of them infinitely more active as gas or crystal than they were as part of a human frame. Nothing is better established than that no force, although expended, ceases: it only takes on another shape, as sound, light, motion. As silent as the soul, as pervasive as heat, or as persistent as the sun ray it somehow remains and everlastingly continues its part in the constitution of the world. So it probably is with that mysterious force among particles that we call the Life.

As Prof. John Fiske says, if individual

consciousness is produced only by the movements and relations of particles of matter, it is natural to suppose that it ceases when the motions cease. If on the other hand, consciousness is a part of the Life that shapes and sustains the world and if "during its temporary imprisonment in material forms, the brain is the instrument" by which it makes itself known; if "the soul is not the music but the harper" then there is no reason to think that it will perish with the change of forms of the harp.*

We may choose to deny that there is any intelligence in the universe: or we may choose to deny that it is a good intelligence. That controversy is outside the scope of this book: but if indeed there is any loving and intelligent power that shapes events, that kindly power would naturally desire to give its creatures what they most long for, the continuance of personality and recognition of one another after death. To assume that this is denied to us is to set a narrow bound

* *Life Everlasting.*

either to the benevolence or to the capacity of that power.

"Whether we take the position of the materialist, that man's consciousness is nothing but the sum of the consciousness of the cells that make up his body; or, the philosophical-religious view, that man's real self is a being which has evolved through past ages of life in this or other worlds, and now lives along with the body as its 'soul;' in either case we are compelled to deal with something that feels itself to be an individual.

"The vital question is: in what is this conviction of individuality ingrained. If not in a 'soul' antedating the body, and, therefore, logically capable of living after the body's dissolution, then, presumably, it must be ingrained alone in the cells of the body. But those who take this position have never shown why individuality should be conceded to the cell—the most primitive physical structure known, the lowest in the scale of mental development—and nevertheless denied to man, who possesses powers immeasurably beyond those of the

cell, powers wholly unrelated to any that can reasonably be supposed to belong to any combination of cells. They have signally failed to show how any conceivable operation of the cells can produce the unit of consciousness which man recognizes as himself.

"That this unit of consciousness is dependent upon a physical organism for its being, is an unwarranted assumption for which the materialist can offer no proof, while the evidence that it may exist independently of such an organism as we now call 'material' is accumulating to a degree that has resulted in the recent desertion of a third of the world's greatest scientists from the materialistic school.

"Therefore, it seems as though we may, with all logic and science on our side, conclude that the individuality of man is not an unstable and fleeting combination of cell-consciousness alone, but may well be an enduring center of conscious life clothed with a subtle 'material' which science may presume to exist but cannot yet measure, the physical body and its few

years being but the least point of its action in space and time." *

Whilst putting this book together, the following letter came to the author. It is a summary of that thought about the probability of personal recognition which *Gates Ajar* had to plead for so many years ago.

". . . I cry out against my boy's extinction.

"Now suppose that, my boy being in Siberia, I knew very well that although for some adequate reason I would never see him again, he was not only alive, but was living in easier circumstances, with a better opportunity for development, progress and happiness than he had ever had before. Can you not see that my mind would be immeasurably relieved, even though our separation were to be permanent? It is the same now. If I could only know that he lives; that he has another chance—another chance for happiness—half my grief would be rolled away. It is this hideous thought that he may have

* Alice Herring Christopher.

been blotted out of existence that is killing me. His life was a tragedy, a martyrdom; a complete resignation of personal ambition, of personal development, to bear the burdens that were loaded upon him by others and by the circumstances of life. And yet, in him were such magnificent possibilities, such undeveloped talents, such keen longings for personal achievement. His life was one long diasppointment. It was all unfinished—unsatisfactory.

"No one can convince me that a state of mind which would be perfectly sane and normal in me if my boy were in Siberia, becomes foolish, narrow, childish, blind and paralytic because he is dead. It's nothing of the kind. It's just the same mind, and reasonable in both cases. It's of no use to tell me my boy may go on living as a part of the life force of the universe. That isn't the same thing at all.

"Now *if* my boy is still in existence, I know that he is going on and up, gloriously free. He is free of the sick body that held him, he is free of the tangled net of duties

and responsibilities and hindrances that caught his every step. I know his keen mind is assimilating, growing, expanding, drawing in the new life at every breath. I know that when I see him he will look as I can remember him as once he was; strong, hopeful, eager, happy, full of action and life—only with the glory of the larger life and the greater possibilities in his face."

If there is continued existence after death, reason can figure out a good many definite facts about its conditions. We know the body dies. If anything lives, it is the thing that thinks, hates, and loves. Therefore there will be no bodily infirmities, as we know them; no hunger, cold, pain or bodily discomfort. We know that money cannot exist in a spiritual world. It is material, like all forms of property. Therefore, poverty and riches and all class distinctions based on them, all suffering rising from them, will be eliminated. To be rid at one stroke of all physical suffering, poverty and caste, is enough to make a new world. There is undoubtedly another

chance—a better chance—for everyone, if existence goes on. It will be a new and improved plane of existence. Drunkenness for instance, and all the evils in its train, will be eliminated, together with all the vices which depend on the material and physical for their pursuit.

There will remain the things which are of the mind only. It would be strange if we should feel that the mind lost or changed any of its qualities with death. Surely we can see that whatever the mind had attained before death, that it will retain the moment after, and a year after, and a century after, unless modified by environment. That it will change very rapidly because of the enormous difference in conditions, could not be doubted.

If then life continues, we can see an enormously better chance; a beautiful chance to go far, far on the upward wisdom; a supreme chance to get ever so much nearer happiness.

Now it can hardly be denied that signs seem to point to the eternal continuance of

all forms of life. Doubtless the vital spark continues, and observance of natural law seems to indicate that it continues through infinite and myriad changes; that identity is never lost.

THE UNIVERSAL LIFE

No budding branch, no pebble from the brook,
No form, no shadow, but new dearness took
From the one thought that life must have an end.

. . . . . .

Then Memory disclosed her face divine,
That like the calm nocturnal lights doth shine
Within the soul, and shows the sacred graves,
And shows the presence that no sunlight craves,
No space, no warmth, but moves among them all;
Gone and yet here, and coming at each call,
With ready voice and eyes that understand,
And lips that ask a kiss, and dear responsive hand.

GEORGE ELIOT: *The Legend of Jubal.*

CHAPTER XVIII

THE UNIVERSAL LIFE

In the lower forms of physical life, from which mankind appears to have risen, there is no death. The amœba does not die, it only grows and divides; by dividing what was one it becomes two, but there is no outgrown body left to decay. Amœbas and moners multiply indefinitely by the simple process of division; there are no young ones, the very substance of the mother forming the substance of two daughters, and this is repeated indefinitely.

The immortality of the amœba and of other forms of continuous life is absolute identity, there is no individuality. If death is unknown among the lowest forms of organized life does not its appearance among higher forms show that it has some importance for those higher forms? The change that we call death is essential to the

individual. Without death there could be no birth of new individuals carrying forward new powers and capacities. Birth and death are the boundaries of that bit of universal life which we call individual consciousness.

Unlike the amœbas, creatures which know birth and death have a responsibility and control over their own lives, although they cannot sever those lives from the life of the rest of the world. It is only through our delusion of individual life separate and distinct from all other life that we get keen pain and disappointment in experience.

Those forms of life which knew no death made no effort to rise in the scale of being. Scientific men say that irritation is a factor in development; if life consists in living on indefinitely without struggle, why struggle? Creatures without death have no incentive to improve or enlarge their powers. Amœbas are no higher in the scale of being to-day than they were a million years ago, and in all probability they will be no higher ten million years

from now. There is nothing to induce growth, life being merely a continuous existence.

But those who knew death sought ways to avoid it as long as possible. Thought, ingenuity, cunning were developed in the effort to overcome adverse circumstances. That group or race which learned the most effective ways of prolonging life became the most powerful, the most civilized. Man's rise in the scale of being has been one continuous struggle against conditions which threatened his physical life.

In the struggle many individuals were sacrificed, but the gain for the race in strength, in thought and in spiritual comprehension has been inestimable. Even the sacrificed lives were not wasted, for in any struggle the sum of the resistance of the conquered becomes part of the victor. Even in the worst of things there is some compensation. The valor and resistance of the South became part of the victorious Union. It did as much as any other force or circumstance to make a real *United* States, and it has entered into and en-

larged the life of the whole nation. Those who have gone down in the age-long struggle for existence, are the martyrs for progress, and all generations since have lived, and those to come will live, upon the fruits of their sacrifice.

Birth and death might almost be regarded, as Carus says, as a "trick devised by nature to bring forth better results and spur its creatures on to use their utmost efforts in a struggle for existence." We grow, not through circumstances, but through the use we make of circumstances.

We think because we have separate bodies that our real life is also separate from the universal Life. We follow this separate idea to its logical conclusion in our relations with our fellows, holding our interests as separate from those about us, and even as unfriendly to them, but in the end we reach the same place as if we had understood that we are an indissoluble part of all life—the death of individual consciousness. The difference is this, that the mistaken idea leads us through much pain and disappointment; even our pleas-

ures leave a sting behind and our sorrows crush us. Resentment burns in our hearts and every hard experience is a personal thrust, while death is the arch-terror of our whole existence.

But for him wno has recognized his individual life as the mere vehicle of his eternal, universal personality, all experience has a purpose and a value far transcending any personal effect, so that pain and disappointment are swallowed up in the lesson learned, and death becomes merely the welcome door to that larger life which shall again and yet again find expression in individual life. Birth and death are equally beneficent. Through them only can life bloom in endless succession, always young, always fresh, always mounting higher and higher in the scale, so that persons, nations, the race itself, may be lifted up to a fuller understanding.

He who understands, does not fear the loss of separate consciousness. He knows that his personality goes on forever, entering into many successive individuals and forever working through them for the good

of all. The Huguenots were expelled from France, losing all they possessed of worldly goods. But wherever they went they carried with them their skill, their perseverance, their faith, their love of liberty, all that made up their noble souls, and the countries that gave them shelter reaped the reward.

Each person can do his part toward lifting the race higher through the strengthening of his own personality. For a man is not one spirit only, but an expression of many spirits blended into unity new and fresh in each new being.

Every fresh personality modifies the expression of those many spirits, and passes it on to still other minds with its own stamp upon it. Thus when a man's body dies, his spirit life continues, and that spiritual life, finding lodgment in the minds of many men, may do more toward lifting the race higher, than he could possibly have done while remaining in the flesh.

Professor Shaler in *The Individual*, says that each person has its trial; if it is suc-

cessful it survives and hands its life on to its progeny, who are likely to inherit the features which gave success to the ancestor. The parent form, having performed the highest part possible to the individual, must be withdrawn from the field to make room for its successors.

That is no less true as to the moral life than as to the physical. A certain ethical pitch is gained, becomes a part of the thought or spirit of the age, a part of human attainment, and then the individual is withdrawn and his work carried forward by the new spirit that in its turn builds higher and is removed.

The first man, the one who stood unsteadily upright on two feet, is gone and forgotten, we thoughtlessly say, but we know that he lives and is remembered in every being facing toward the stars.

Wherein then, can a man's death be an evil either for himself or for those who love him? If we regard life as continuous, then if any part is good, we must believe that all life is good.

THE INDIVIDUAL LEGACY

Two principles in human nature reign
Self-love to urge, and reason to restrain:
Nor this a good, nor that a bad we call:
Each works its end, to move or govern all:
And to their proper operation still
Ascribe all good, to their improper—ill.

POPE: *Essay on Man.*

CHAPTER XIX

THE INDIVIDUAL LEGACY

Inventions are ideas worked out in materials, and we see how every invention increases man's power both physically and mentally, but we do not always recognize that abstract ideas and sentiments are no less important to man's development. They are the causes of soul development; the soul is the measure of a man, and is the legacy that every individual bequeaths to the race.

We say of anybody we like or admire, "He has such a charming personality," often without a very clear idea of what "personality" means. Our personality is really our own ideas and sentiments added to what we have inherited from the race. Every such charming personality means an addition to this generation's bequest to its successor, for this is an immortal

part of man that does not cease when the body decays, but lives on in other men's lives.

Though each personality becomes a part of the race inheritance, it does not lose its own character or peculiarity, any more than each stone cemented into the body of stones in the wall of a building loses its own shape or character in becoming a part of the wall. Even though an outer coating of cement be put over all, so that to the observer the wall seems as one solid piece, yet the builder knows that under that smooth surface each separate stone remains just what it was when added to the wall. It is not lost or even swallowed up; its existence continues.

So it is with our loved ones. They are not lost nor even swallowed up. Only the physical body through which they impressed their character upon us has crumbled away, being no longer needed. But the real self endures and is of as great importance to us and to all men, and is as much an existence as ever it was.

Dr. Carus likens each person to a knot

into which are gathered many threads, these threads being the ideas and sentiments of individuals since Time was. At the knot the cluster of threads glows with consciousness, and makes the individual that we call "I," the ego. This being so, it is not "I" who have ideas, views and opinions, but ideas, views and opinions have me in their grip, and mould my personality. As Heine says, "We do not possess our ideas; they possess us and force us into the arena to do battle for them." This is in accordance with modern psychology which regards the ego,—what we call "consciousness," not as the cause, but as the product of thought. The ego in itself is unreal, but it represents man and man is real.

We cry out against death for ourselves and for those we love because we think it will destroy the "I," and we would perpetuate that "I." We say it is not enough that our character, our thoughts, our ideals shall be perpetuated; we want that "I" which created the character to live forever. But that is only because we confuse the

individual consciousness with personality itself.

What is this that cries for the existence of the "I?" Schopenhauer answers "that is not you alone, but everything, simply everything, that has a trace of consciousness. If that is so, this wish in you is precisely that which is *not* individual, but common to all without distinction. It does not spring from your individuality but from existence generally; it is essential to everything that exists, is indeed that *whereby* it exists, and will accordingly be satisfied by existence *in general* to which alone it refers, and not exclusively by any determinate personal existence."

Therefore, when we ask that we continue, we are in reality asking that the same personality shall continue, not merely our individual consciousness of personality. Death, or the suspension of that consciousness, is as necessary as birth, or the glow of consciousness; else there must be fewer knots in the net of life, fewer points that break into new light.

The loss of that consciousness is not the

destruction of the personality, any more than the loss of the body is the destruction of the soul. Carus likens the human body also to the paper in a book, and the soul to the true thought expressed in the words. The paper may be torn or burnt, but the words are reprinted and appear in new editions. The various copies of a book will be used up; but the thoughts will be read and remembered; they will be copied and preserved. "The words are the soul of the book; they, and not the paper and printer's ink, are the book itself."

To carry his simile further, both the book and the thought often survive. So it may be that out of the flesh we shall see the work of our souls—and be satisfied.

PROGRESS THROUGH CONSE-QUENCES

Life is not an idle ore
But iron dug from central gloom
And heated hot with burning fears
And dipped in baths of hissing tears
And battered with the shocks of doom
To shape and use.

TENNYSON: *In Memoriam.*

CHAPTER XX

PROGRESS THROUGH CONSEQUENCES

We are not nearly perfect, but we are doing the best we can and we are progressing. We say that "by God's help we are better or stronger than we were." We cannot suppose that the Spirit of Life gives any poorer help than it can or that we can receive. The progress of true civilization consists in this, that from age to age men and women learn to live more friendlike together. We live more and more by love and less by war. We become suited each to all the rest. When we get entirely suited to one another and to our surroundings, we shall have very little disease or accident; we shall guard the health of others and in doing that we shall guard our own. We shall reduce danger

for all to its lowest point, and our doctors will have far more skill.

The church service has a prayer, "Deliver us from sudden death", if that is not intended to mean unprepared death. We forget that to most persons sudden death is the most unselfish and desirable of deaths. We think of death as leaving children uncared for, or to the care of hirelings, and as leaving parents without anyone to sustain them in age. The name "widow" carries with it the thought of desolation if not of poverty. This is due to the unloving social conditions we create, and not to unavoidable, natural causes.

In the coming time we shall have no one left dependent or helpless by death. As we grow in love we shall make an atmosphere of love where all the babies in the world shall be truly ours, where none shall be "base-born" or friendless but all children of men. The parents who have lost their only child are far more to be pitied than those who have lost one of a family, often they reproach themselves that there was but one.

The childless home is a desolate abode compared to that house where happy laughter still resounds, as it seems in the ears of the older ones, almost untimely. In the coming time we shall be all one family and we shall know and understand, so much more than we do now, that death will seem as natural as it really is, not a causeless calamity, and the terror of it will vanish.

Although we have no grounds for believing in an all-powerful Being who could have made men perfect, but did not, we do see some unmistakable evidences of Supernal Power. Such love and power as we see reason to believe in, we reasonably trust. Our difficulty seems to be mainly because we try to believe in a power that could be kinder than it is. When a child finds that its father can't save him from the labor of learning, he does not think him an incapable or unkind father. He knows that his father is doing the best he can, and is expecting him to help by doing his best too.

But why did this Power, this Nature of things, this God, or whatever you call him, bring forth men at all if he could not make them perfect without pain? If we knew that perfectly we should be gods already ourselves; that is what is set forth in the parable of Eden and the tree of life.

It was in the mild tablelands where the earth brought forth abundantly and existence was easy that man grew into human form; wild fruit nourished him and he had no need of covering. He grew in stature and in strength. There, sheeplike, he might have lived in ease, but his mind grew, too, and he sought experience. He ate of the tree of knowledge, he wanted to get new thoughts and feelings. The impulse of growth possessed him, much as it possesses the germ of life in the acorn and makes it expand, burst its shell, force its way through the earth and push steadily on from year to year until it becomes a tree. There is an element of consciousness in man's growth, lacking in the acorn, but the principle in both is the same.

The "curse" that man brought upon

himself was the development of appetites hitherto unknown. Sterile or uncultivated lands brought forth things he did not know how to use, or which would not satisfy the new cravings. Man and the earth alike had fewer possibilities in those early ages.

Elohim "cursed" the ground that except to labor it should bring forth "thorns and thistles." To produce what he needed, man was to toil, for only in the sweat of his man-like face should he eat bread. Then Nature produces prodigally enough to feed all her children. Through æons of experience animals have learned to avoid what is injurious to their life and to choose what sustains them. They adapt little to themselves but adapt themselves to Nature's offerings.

Man on the other hand, finds his best sustenance in adapted, re-organized, natural products and to obtain these he must labor both with hands and brain. With the sweat of his brain as well as of his brawn he must supply his own increasing needs. This then was the curse that followed man's desire "to know;" he

might no longer feed on the wild growths as the cattle did, but must himself produce what he desires.

When the human race differentiated into male and female, this labor of cultivation fell upon the female, while the male roved the woods and plains in search of the flesh of animals. So that for all he needed he had to expend labor. Moreover, the skins of such animals kept him warm and helped to preserve life.

Upon the woman, progenitor of life, fell still another form of the "curse." The new ways of living, complicated by increasing development of the mind and its multiplied desires, brought her birth-pains far fiercer than the animal ever had. This was perfectly natural. It requires more labor and pains to cut and polish the diamond so that all its possibilities of beauty and brilliance shall be manifest, than merely to dig the rough carbon crystals out of the earth. The product of the increased labor and suffering was so much superior to anything the animals produced, that she loses all recollection of

that suffering in her joy that she has produced a *man*-child and not merely an animal.

The flaming sword which forever barred man's return to the care-free life of the animal, was probably his own discovery of fire, which opened up visions of new possibilities, creating new appetites and desires that had to be appeased.

Such was the slow course of that development which we call evolution, set out in parable for those who could understand. Growth is the principle of life—nay, more, is Life itself.

THE BREAKDOWN OF FAITH

THE DEAD

Who are the Dead?
Are they the souls, who, questing, forth have fared
Through the loose doors of their frail tenements?
Who tarried not for staff, nor wine, nor bread?
Who to the stress of Night their bosoms bared,
Despite our bitter tears, our fond laments?
Are they the Dead?

Who are the Dead?
Are they the souls who, from their larger view,
Regard with quiet eyes our foolish ways?
Marvel that we should seek to stay, instead
Of speeding them to their environs new,
And smile to see the sepulchres we raise?
Are they the Dead?

Who are the Dead?
Say, rather, are not we in full-sensed life,
Bound by our sickly fears, our outworn creeds
That strangely speak of faith;—we, who are led
Apart from Love, by selfish aims and strife,
Stifled, enslaved, undone by our misdeeds—
Are not we dead?

ADELAIDE GUTHRIE.

CHAPTER XXI

THE BREAKDOWN OF FAITH

THE 91st Psalm is extremely comforting, if one can believe it. We have, however, other beliefs entirely inconsistent with that. One can believe in a Power that is wise and great and good but not in an *all*-wise, all-powerful and all-loving Being and at the same time believe he causes suffering and evil. Those who accept that theory take refuge in saying that it is a "mystery." If one admits that twice two is six, it is a mystery how two goes into four only twice. If there is an all-powerful God who could have made a universe needing no evil and wanted to do so but did not, then there is truly a mystery from which men have tried to escape by setting up another power, the devil, able partly to frustrate the kind intention of the all-powerful One.

Says Rev. Wm. C. Gannett in *The Sparrow's Fall:* "What if Omnipotence itself be so conditioned by its own good ends that it cannot *help* the happening of the tragedies?" The religion of Jesus does not require us to believe that God could do everything. When we are quiet and freed from confusion, we believe in some kind of supreme intelligence no matter what we may call it, because we have no other possible explanation of the course of nature. Then because we see a wonderful benign force we make up an inflexible Power, infinite, unchangeable, all-powerful, and when the idea breaks down, we say there is no benign Force, no God at all.

We see that it is impossible that any "God" could do everything. "God," said the child, "could not make a two-year old calf in a minute." It might be like a two-year old calf but having just been made, it's clear that it would not be two years old.

It is not enough to say that God is trying our faith. If he is an omniscient

God he knows how much it is without trying; nor will it do to say that he is exercising us in faith. Neither a kind nor a wise trainer gives an exercise beyond the pupil's strength nor strains his muscles. Of course, the discipline may be in order to show us that we had no faith, that we have just received without thinking, things that were said to us.

You would gladly do something for others but what you can do seems so trivial and hopeless. Now more than ever it seems all effort is worthless. You are not the first who has thought that. Read what one great thinker wrote, a man who truly gave his life for the people, one who learned that "Life is not greater than death, that, having given his life for love a man should withhold his death."

I have in this inquiry followed the course of my own thought. When, in mind, I set out on it I had no theory to support, nor conclusions to prove. Only, when I first realized the squalid misery of a great city, it appalled and tormented me, and would not let me rest, for

thinking of what caused it and how it could be cured.

But out of this inquiry has come to me something I did not think to find, and a faith that was dead revives.

It is difficult to reconcile the idea of human immortality with the idea that nature wastes men by constantly bringing them into being where there is no room for them. It is impossible to reconcile the idea of an intelligent and beneficent Creator with the belief that the wretchedness and degradation which are the lot of such a large proportion of human kind result from his enactments; while the idea that man mentally and physically is the result of slow modifications perpetuated by heredity, irresistibly suggests the idea that it is the race life, not the individual life, which is the object of human existence. Thus has vanished with many of us and is still vanishing with more of us, that belief which in the battles and ills of life affords the strongest support and deepest consolation.

Now, in the inquiry through which we have passed, we have met these doctrines and seen their fallacy. We have seen that population does not tend to outrun subsistence; we have seen that the waste of human powers and the prodigality of human suffering do not spring from natural laws, but from the ignorance and

selfishness of men in refusing to conform to natural laws. We have seen that human progress is not by altering the nature of men; but that, on the contrary, the nature of men seems, generally speaking, always the same.

Thus the nightmare which is banishing from the modern world the belief in a future life is destroyed. Not that all difficulties are removed, for turn which way we may, we come to what we cannot comprehend; but that difficulties are removed which seem conclusive and insuperable. And, thus, hope springs up.

But this is not all. . . .

For properly understood, the laws which govern the production and distribution of wealth show that the want and injustice of the present social state are not necessary; but that, on the contrary, a social state is possible in which poverty would be unknown, and all the better qualities and higher powers of human nature would have opportunity for full development.

And, further than this, when we see that social development is governed neither by a Special Providence nor by a merciless fate, but by law, at once unchangeable and beneficent; when we see that human will is the great factor, and that taking men in the aggregate, their condition is as they make it; when we see that economic law and moral law are essentially

one, and that the truth which the intellect grasps after toilsome effort is but that which the moral sense reaches by a quick intuition, a flood of light breaks in upon the problem of individual life. These countless millions like ourselves, who on this earth of ours have passed and still are passing, with their joys and sorrows, their toil and their striving, their aspirations and their fears, their strong perceptions of things deeper than sense, their common feelings which form the basis even of the most divergent creeds—their little lives do not seem so much like meaningless waste.

The great fact which Science in all her branches shows is the universality of law. Wherever he can trace it, whether in the fall of an apple or in the revolution of binary suns the astronomer sees the working of the law, which operates in the minutest divisions in which we may distinguish space, as it does in the immeasurable distances with which his science deals. Out of that which lies beyond his telescope comes a moving body and again it disappears. So far as he can trace its course the law is ignored. Does he say that this is an exception? On the contrary, he says that this is merely a part of its orbit that he has seen; that beyond the reach of his telescope the law holds good. He makes his calculations, and after centuries they are proved.

Now, if we trace out the laws which govern human life in society, we find that in the largest as in the smallest community, they are the same. We find that what seem at first sight like divergences and exceptions are but manifestations of the same principles. And we find that everywhere we can trace, the social law runs into and conforms with the moral law; that in the life of a community, justice infallibly brings its rewards and injustice its punishment. But this we cannot see in individual life. If we look merely at individual life we cannot see that the laws of the universe have the slightest relation to good or bad, to right or wrong, to just or unjust. Shall we then say that the law which is manifest in social life is not true of individual life? It is not scientific to say so. We would not say so in reference to anything else. Shall we not rather say this simply proves that we do not see the whole of individual life? HENRY GEORGE: *Progress and Poverty*, Conclusion.

Selfishness is not a thing to be blamed; it is a thing to be outgrown. When Henry George lay dead surrounded by his followers and apostles, one of them said: "I have seen big men growing bigger in this loss." That is a sign of growth, of having

listened to and learned the lesson the loss was fitted to teach. Probably they had learned to lean too much on their leader and did not know that they could go forward without him. While that remained true they would not have grown, thus defeating the very purpose of his life and of theirs.

I say that man was made to grow, not stop;
That help, he needed once, and needs no more,
Having grown up but an inch by, is withdrawn:
For he hath new needs, and new helps to these.
This imports solely, man should mount on each
New height in view; the help whereby he mounts,
The ladder-rung his foot has left, may fall,
Since all things suffer change save God the Truth.
Man apprehends Him newly at each stage
Whereat earth's ladder drops, its service done;
And nothing shall prove twice what once was proved.

BROWNING: *A Death in the Desert.*

Instinctively the child asks of everything it sees "what is it for?" We can usually tell him what man-made things are "for." We are used to think of every-

thing as useful only if we see that it serves man's desires directly or indirectly, so that when we come to natural things that seem harmful, like serpents or earthquakes, we are not clear.

Earthquakes were a necessary part of forming the world; as the molten mass cooled, the crust of the world hardened, and when the inside cooled and shrank it wrinkled the earth into valleys and hills like the skin of a drying apple. Now that the world has come to the stage that on the whole it suits us, we complain that earthquakes continue: that is only because we do not reflect that they were useful and are inevitable and necessary from the constitution of the earth that made it habitable for us.

THERE IS NO DEATH

THERE IS NO DEATH

Look Nature through, 'tis revolution all,
All change, no death. Day follows night, and night
The dying day; stars rise and set and rise,
Earth takes th' example. See the Summer gay
With her green chaplet, and ambrosial flowers,
Droops into pallid Autumn; Winter gray,
Horrid with frost, and turbulent with storm
Blows Autumn and his golden fruits away;
Then melts into the Spring. Soft Spring with breath
Favonian from warm chambers of the South
Recalls the first.

YOUNG: *Night Thoughts.*

CHAPTER XXII

THERE IS NO DEATH

When Ralph Waldo Emerson lost his son the Spirit came to him saying:

> What is excellent,
> As God lives, is permanent;
> Hearts are dust, heart's loves remain;
> Heart's love will meet thee again.

Death is as natural and as necessary as birth, and it is no more mysterious. Death is no more a mystery than sleep or life. We do not know any more about sleep than we do about death. The birth implies the death. For death is only change, a necessary incident of the continuous life of the world. Bad as is our social state it is easy to see that if death did not cut off the unfit, the world would be filled with nothing but misery. When the house of the flesh becomes so worn or so diseased

as to be beyond repair, life and love pull it down and build afresh: that is what we call death.

For comfort we may look to the course of nature and seeing how good it is, trust in the one law of birth and growth and change which we have been taught to call death only when it applies to ourselves.

It is hardly to be expected that we shall find much comfort while our grief is new, in these or in any philosophies: they are useful mostly for the future, for the days that stretch out hopelessly before us. Now with all our efforts at consolation only one thing helps in the moment of desolation—the affection it brings out.

Grief softens the heart, breaks down barriers. The time of strain brings us together and makes us one. So quickly does the human heart respond to suffering that even he who thought himself our enemy finds his sympathy stirred. His hand or his tongue is restrained from further violence when death has sanctified any of our relations to life. For the majesty of death touches the bereaved, if they

will but allow it, attuning heart and ear to sweeter, finer melodies than were ever heard before. In that moment many a one gains courage to say "I love you" who never would have dared to utter it in time of peace. The first bereavement is a new experience, often a new birth to the soul.

It is Love under the guise of death that ". . . began the world . . . not this world. The world that sets this right." *

Whatever there may be in the hope which most religions teach that we shall shortly see our friends again just as they were when they parted from us, is so much gain. But aside from that, we know what has always made life worth living; we know that just in so far as we kept our hearts and minds full of love and our lives full of loving acts we have been happy, and we can continue that life and love. We know that our beloved called out to the fullest extent that lovingness and that he still calls it out, yes, calls it out in some ways more than when his bodily form was with us.

* *Little Dorrit*, Bk. 2, Chap. 19.

No matter what the justification, happiness is not to be found in thinking of ourselves. What have you done for others since the great event? What have you done to-day, now in the moment of your greatest depression? What are you doing for anybody else just now?

> The most ideal Joy is found in service. It is the keynote of existence,—service both here and hereafter, service in the highest,—this is what is meant by the "Joy of the Lord."
>
> *De Profundis.*

To do real kindness that will be felt both by ourselves and others we must first put all bitterness out of our hearts. This hour of bereavement is the time to cast out resentment, to heal old quarrels. We shall find the hearts of others inclined to us, often awaiting only the word that our sorrow entitles us to speak.

But it must not be done from duty, what is done from mere cold "duty" is pleasing to no loving Power.

Happiness seems to me to consist in the consciousness of achievement; and har-

mony with one's surroundings is the highest achievement. The most perfect harmony is in love and the expression of love, and these we may have. By love and with love are the world's wounds healed; only with our hands in Love's can we come into the temple of Peace.

APPENDIX

THOSE who wish to see what the older classics give as comfort about death will find it well cited and summarized in Plutarch's letter of consolation to Apollonius, *Miscellanies and Essays*, edited by Professor W. W. Goodwin, vol. V (Little, Brown & Co.), and in the following beautiful letter which is quoted from the same source:

PLUTARCH TO HIS WIFE: ALL HEALTH.

1. As for the messenger you despatched to tell me of the death of my little daughter, it seems he missed his way as he was going to Athens. But when I came to Tanagra, I heard of it by my niece. I suppose by this time the funeral is over. I wish that whatever has been done may create you no dissatisfaction, as well now as hereafter. But if you have designedly let any thing alone, depending upon my judgment, thinking better to de-

termine the point if I were with you, I pray let it be without ceremony and timorous superstition, which I know are far from you.

2. Only, dear wife, let you and me bear our affliction with patience. I know very well and do comprehend what loss we have had; but if I should find you grieve beyond measure, this would trouble me more than the thing itself. For I had my birth neither from a stock nor a stone; and you know it full well, I having been assistant to you in the education of so many children, which we brought up at home under our own care. This daughter was born after four sons, when you were longing to bear a daughter; which made me call her by your own name. Therefore I know she was particularly dear to you. And grief must have a peculiar pungency in a mind tenderly affectionate to children, when you call to mind how naturally witty and innocent she was, void of anger, and not querulous. She was naturally mild, and compassionate to a miracle. And her gratitude and kindness not only gave us delight, but also manifested her generous nature; for she would pray her nurse to give suck, not only to other children, but to her very playthings, as it were courteously inviting them to her table, and making the best cheer for them she could.

3. Now, my dear wife, I see no reason why these and the like things, which delighted us

so much when she was alive, should upon remembrance of them afflict us when she is dead. But I also fear lest, while we cease from sorrowing, we should forget her; as Clymene said,

> I hate the handy horned bow,
> And banish youthful pastimes now;

because she would not be put in mind of her son by the exercises he had been used to. For Nature always shuns such things as are troublesome. But since our little daughter afforded all our senses the sweetest and most charming pleasure; so ought we to cherish her memory, which will conduce many ways—or rather many fold—more to our joy than our grief. And it is but just, that the same arguments which we have oft-times used to others should prevail upon ourselves at this so seasonable a time, and that we should not supinely sit down and overwhelm the joys which we have tasted with a multiplicity of new griefs.

4. Moreover, they who were present at the funeral report this with admiration, that you neither put on mourning, nor disfigured yourself or any of your maids; neither were there any costly preparations nor magnificent pomp; but all things were managed with silence and moderation in the presence of our relatives alone. And it seemed not strange to me that

you, who never used richly to dress yourself for the theatre or other public solemnities, esteeming such magnificence vain and useless even in matters of delight, have now practiced frugality on this sad occasion. For a virtuous woman ought not only to preserve her purity in riotous feasts, but also to think thus with herself, that the tempest of the mind in violent grief must be calmed by patience, which does not intrench on the natural love of parents towards their children, as many think, but only struggles against the disorderly and irregular passions of the mind. For we allow this love of children to discover itself in lamenting, wishing for, and longing after them when they are dead. But the excessive inclination to grief, which carries people on to unseemly exclamations and furious behavior, is no less culpable than luxurious intemperance. Yet reason seems to plead in its excuse; because, instead of pleasure, grief and sorrow are ingredients of the crime. What can be more irrational, I pray, than to check excessive laughter and joy, and yet to give a free course to rivers of tears and sighs, which flow from the same fountain? Or, as some do, quarrel with their wives for using artificial helps to beauty, and in the mean time suffer them to shave their heads, wear the mournful black, sit disconsolate, and lie in pain? And, which

is worst of all, if their wives at any time chastise their servants or maids immoderately, they will interpose and hinder them, but at the same time offering them to torment and punish themselves most cruelly, in a case which peculiarly requires their greatest tenderness and humanity?

5. But between us, dear wife, there never was any occasion for such contests, nor, I think, will there ever be. For there is no philosopher of our acquaintance who is not in love with your frugality, both in apparel and diet; nor a citizen, to whom the simplicity and plainness of your dress is not conspicuous, both at religious sacrifices and public shows in the theatre. Formerly also you discovered on the like occasion a great constancy of mind, when you lost your eldest son; and again, when the lovely Chaeron left us. For I remember, when the news was brought me of my son's death, as I was returning home with some friends and guests who accompanied me to my house, when they beheld all things in order, and observed a profound silence everywhere,—as they afterwards declared to others,—they thought no such calamity had happened, but that the report was false. So discreetly had you settled the affairs of the house at that time, when no small confusion and disorder might have been expected. And yet you gave this

son suck yourself, and endured the lancing of your breast, to prevent the ill effects of a contusion. These are things worthy of a generous woman, and one that loves her children.

6. Whereas, we see most other women receive their children in their hands as playthings with a feminine mirth and jollity; and afterwards, if they chance to die, they will drench themselves in the most vain and excessive sorrow. Not that this is any effect of their love, for that gentle passion acts regularly and discreetly; but it rather proceeds from a desire of vain-glory, mixed with a little natural affection, which renders their mourning barbarous, brutish, and extravagant. Which thing Æsop honors to the Gods; for, it seems, Grief also made her demands, and it was granted that she should be honored, but only by those who were willing of their own accord to do it. And indeed, this is the beginning of sorrow. Everybody first gives her free access; and after she is once rooted and settled and become familiar, she will not be forced thence with their best endeavors. Therefore she must be resisted at her first approach; nor must we surrender the fort to her by any exterior signs, whether of apparel, or shaving the hair, or any other such like symptoms of mournful weakness; which happening daily, and wounding us by degrees with a kind of foolish bashfulness, at

length do so enervate the mind, and reduce her to such straits, that quite dejected and besieged with grief, the poor timorous wretch dare not to be merry, or see the light, or eat and drink in company. This inconvenience is accompanied by a neglect of the body, carelessness of anointing and bathing, with whatsoever else relates to the elegancy of human life. Whereas, on the contrary, the soul, when it is disordered, ought to receive aid from the vigor of a healthful body. For the sharpest edge of the soul's grief is rebated and slacked, when the body is in tranquillity and ease, like the sea in a calm. But where, from an ill course of diet, the body becomes dry and hot, so that it cannot supply the soul with commodious and serene spirits, but only breathes forth melancholy vapors and exhalations, which perpetually annoy her with grief and sadness; there it is difficult for a man (though never so willing and desirous) to recover the tranquillity of his mind, after it has been disturbed with so many evil affections.

7. But that which is most to be dreaded in this case does not at all affrighten me, to wit, the visits of foolish women, and their accompanying you in your tears and lamentations; by which they sharpen your grief, not suffering it either of itself or by the help of others to fade and vanish away. For I am not ignorant

how great a combat you lately entered, when you assisted the sister of Theon, and opposed the women who came running in with horrid cries and lamentations, bringing fuel as it were to her passion. Assuredly, when men see their neighbor's house on fire, everyone contributes his utmost to quench it; but when they see the mind inflamed with furious passion, they bring fuel to nourish and increase the flame. When a man's eye is in pain, he is not suffered to touch it, though the inflammation provoke him to it, nor will they that are near him meddle with it. But he who is galled with grief sits and exposes his distemper to everyone, like waters that all may pouch in; and so that which at first seemed a light itching or trivial smart, by much fretting and provoking, becomes a great and almost incurable disease. But I know very well that you will arm yourself against these inconveniences.

8. Moreover, I would have you endeavor to call often to mind that time when our daughter was not as yet born to us, and when we had no cause to complain of Fortune. Then, joining that time with this, argue thus with yourself, that we are now in the same condition as then. Otherwise, dear wife, we shall seem discontented at the birth of our little daughter, if we own that our circumstances were better before her birth. But the two years of her life are by

no means to be forgotten by us, but to be numbered amongst our blessings, in that they afforded us an agreeable pleasure. Nor must we esteem a small good for a great evil; nor ungratefully complain against Fortune for what she has actually given us, because she has not added what we wished for. Certainly, to speak reverently of the Gods, and to bear our lot with an even mind without accusing Fortune, always brings with it a fair reward. But he who in such a case calls prosperous things to mind, and turning his thoughts from dark and melancholy objects, fixes them on bright and cheerful ones, will either quite extinguish his grief, or by allaying it with contrary sentiments, will render it weak and feeble. For, as perfumes bring delight to the nose, and arm it against ill scents, so the remembrance of happiness gives necessary assistance in adversity to those who avoid not the recollection of their past prosperity nor complain at all against Fortune. For certainly it would little become us to accuse our life, if like a book it hath but one little blot in it, though all the rest be fair and clean.

9. For you have oftentimes heard, that true happiness consists in the right discourses and counsels of the mind, tending to its own constant establishment, and that the changes of Fortune are of no great importance to the

felicity of our life. But even if we must also be governed by exterior things, and with the common sort of people have a regard to casualties, and suffer any kind of men to be judges of our happiness, however, do not you take notice of the tears and moans of such as visit you at present, condoling your misfortunes; for their tears and sighs are but of course. But rather, do you consider how happy every one of them esteems you for the children you have, the house you keep, and the life you lead. For it would be an ill thing, while others covet your fortune, though sullied with this affliction, that you should exclaim against what you enjoy, and not be sensible, from the taste of affliction, how grateful you ought to be for the happiness which remains untouched. Or, like some who, collecting all the defective verses of Homer, pass over at the time so many excellent parts of his poems, so shall we peevishly complain of and reckon up the inconveniences of our life, neglecting at the same time promiscuously the benefits thereof? Or, shall we imitate covetous and sordid misers, who, having heaped together much riches, never enjoy what they have in possession, but bewail it if it chance to be lost?

But if you lament the poor girl because she died unmarried and without offspring, you

have wherewithal to comfort yourself, in that you are defective in none of these things, having had your share. And these are not to be esteemed at once great evils where they are wanted, and small benefits where they are enjoyed. But so long as she is gone to a place where she feels no pain, what need is there of our grief? For what harm can befall us from her, when she is free from all hurt? And surely the loss of even great things abates the grief, when it is come to this, that we have no need or use of them. But thy Timoxena was deprived but of small matter; for she had no knowledge but of such, neither took she delight but in such small things. But for that which she never was sensible of, and which did not so much as once enter into her thoughts, how can you say it is taken from her?

10. As for what you hear others say, who persuade the vulgar that the soul, when once freed from the body, suffers no inconvenience or evil nor is sensible at all, I know that you are better grounded in the doctrines delivered down to us from our ancestors, as also in the sacred mysteries of Bacchus, than to believe such stories; for the religious symbols are well known to us who are of the fraternity. Therefore be assured, that the soul, being incapable of death, is affected in the same manner as birds that are kept in a cage. For if she has

been a long time educated and cherished in the body, and by long custom has been made familiar with most things of this life, she will (though separable) return again, and at length enter the body; nor ceaseth it by new births now and then to be entangled in the chances and events of this life. For do not think that old age is therefore evil spoken of and blamed, because it is accompanied with wrinkles, gray hairs and weakness of body. But this is the most troublesome thing in old age, that it maketh the soul weak in its remembrance of divine things, and too earnest for things relating to the body; thus it bendeth and boweth, retaining that form which it took of the body. But that which is taken away in youth, being more soft and tractable, soon returns to its native vigor and beauty. Just as fire that is quenched, if it be forthwith kindled again, sparkles and burns out immediately. . . . So most speedily

'Twere good to pass the gates of death,

before too great a love of bodily and earthly things be engendered in the soul, and it become soft and tender by being used to the body, and (as it were) by charms and potions incorporated with it.

11. But the truth of this will appear in the laws and traditions received from our ancestors.

For when children die, no libations nor sacrifices are made for them, nor any other of those ceremonies which are wont to be performed for the dead. For infants have no part of earth or earthly affections. Nor do we hover or tarry about their sepulchres or monuments, or sit by when their dead bodies are exposed. The laws of our country forbid this, and teach us that it is an impious thing to lament for those whose souls pass immediately into a better and more divine state. Wherefore, since it is safer to give credit to our traditions than to call them in question, let us comply with the custom in outward and public behavior, and let our interior be more unpolluted, pure, and holy. . . .

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